'No cutback in demand for RP workers'

By TJ Burgonio, Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Alcuin Papa

DESPITE THE GLOOMY FORECASTS, Filipinos should not fret about job losses or possible cutbacks in opportunities in the United States, the Middle East and elsewhere, Labor Secretary Marianito Roque said yesterday.

Roque said the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) had not received any reports from its 37 labor officers posted abroad about cutbacks in the

NO CUTBACK / A10

BUSINESS / B1

Sumitomo plans $1.7-B nickel plant in RP

ACROSS / A17

Cagayan de Oro traders stage revolt vs BIR exec

BUSINESS / B1

Financial crisis takes toll on insurance sales

WORLD / A32

McCain vows underdog comeback

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, October 15, 2008 ★ 8 sections / Vol. 23 / No. 312 P18 www.inquirer.net

JOB Libre CAREER EXPO 2008

Inquirer's 3-day job fair opens today at Glorietta Activity Center

Stocks soar on multitrillion-dollar bailouts

LONDON—STOCK MARKETS IN EUROPE and Asia surged for a second straight day on Tuesday after Wall Street rallied from its worst week ever on optimism about attempts by the United States and major economic powers to shore up the battered international financial system.

Following a European multitrillion-dollar plan to bail out banks, the US Treasury was expected to unveil on Tuesday its plan to pump $250 billion into American banks, with about half of the amount going to the top nine financial institutions to get them lending to each other again.

Gathering storm clouds, however, cast a pall over the big spike in the stock markets, with two of Europe's biggest economies—France and Germany—said to be on the brink of recession.

STOCKS A21

DOWN AND OUT Three businessmen who lost their jobs in the financial meltdown perform for the crowd for money on Wall Street outside the New York Stock Exchange on Monday. AFP

BACK IN BUSINESS Traders celebrate on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange at Monday's closing bell. US stocks surged more than 11 percent. AFP

RP an island of calm amid storm—S&P

By Christian V. Esguerra

FILIPINOS MAY BE GRUMBLING ABOUT the hard times but to an international credit rating outfit, the Philippines is "an island of calm" in a world financially in turmoil.

The favorable assessment of the country was made by Agusto Bernard, Standard & Poor's associate director, in an e-mail to Malacañang's investor relations office.

Malacañang yesterday distributed a portion of the e-mail to reporters, ostensibly to reinforce the Arroyo administration's contention that the country was

SPAIN ISLAND A21

SC: Moro land deal illegal

'Whimsical, capricious, oppressive'

By Norman Bordadora

THE MEMORANDUM OF agreement on ancestral domain (MOA-AD) between the government and a Moro separatist rebel group is illegal and unconstitutional, and the process that led to its crafting was "whimsical, capricious, oppressive, arbitrary and despotic," the Supreme Court declared yesterday.

Voting 8-7 on the petition of officials of North Cotabato, Iligan City and Zamboanga City, the high court stopped Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Hermogenes Esperon and the government panel from signing and executing the agreement that laid the foundation for the creation of an expanded Bangsamoro homeland in Mindanao.

It described the agreement as "contrary to law and the Constitution," and called for public consultations in accordance with the right to information

SC RAPS PACT A21

MUSLIM schoolboys examine a globe in the Arabic language and Islamic values education class at Ibarra Elementary School in Manila on Tuesday. Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith visited the school last week and announced that his country will provide $9.14 million to improve primary education for the minority Muslim and indigenous children in the Philippines. AFP

MILF to take case to UN, Islamic states

THE MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT (MILF) is preparing to take the scuttled memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain (MOA-AD) to the international arena.

MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal said the separatist group would be willing to renegotiate "only on the basis" of the agreement "and with the presence of representatives of the international community."

"We will bring this before the international community, like the Organization of the Islamic Conference [and] the United Nations. We need an international guarantee that if we return to the negotiating table, the government will be true to its word," Iqbal told Inquirer Mindanao on the phone.

"There is no hope of addressing this problem [at the] domestic level," he said.

Former Rep. Michael Mastura, a member of the MILF negotiating panel, said the government should take "a singular stand" on the matter so that the peace talks could succeed.

Mastura said the Arroyo administration and the opposition "must agree for

MILF TO TAKE A21

JDV urged to back son, ink impeach complaint

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and TJ Burgonio

MINORITY LAWMAKERS IN the House of Representatives are urging former Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. to support the impeachment complaint filed by a group led by his son on Monday against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

House Minority Leader Rodolfo Zamora said convincing other members of the House to sign up would be difficult if the father of the complainant would not put his name on it.

"I think he [the elder De Venecia] should have been the first to endorse it," Deputy Minority Leader Rolin Golez said. The former Speaker is in Cambodia.

But the former Speaker's son, businessman Joey de Venecia III, said that his father would not be endorsing the complaint.

"He says that because I am his son and the lead complainant, there is a conflict of interest. Out of delicadeza (sense of propriety) and a high code of ethics, he

JDV URGED A21

Human bone in Bataan camp

By Nikko Dizon

LIMAY, BATAAN—SHAVING razor, a fast-fading team yesterday dug up a yellow rubber slipper, a laced shirt and burned fragments of what they suspected was a human bone in an area where a former detainee said he saw people being cre-

A DECAYING rubber sandal, dug up by the Commission on Human Rights fact-finding team, is stored in a Ziplock bag. Raymond Manalo, who was himself abducted, tortured and later escaped from a military camp in Bataan, said the slipper belonged to Manuel Merino whose body was allegedly burned by soldiers in Limay, Bataan. MARI LUMBA

rained by soldiers.

The detainee, Bataan farmer Raymond Manalo, said he believed the personal effects belonged to University of the Philippines student Karen Empeno and a companion, Manuel Merino, both missing for two years.

The group, which included a team of anthropologists, used shovels and other digging tools in their search for evidence that would prove allegations of military involvement in the enforced disappearances and killings of political activists.

The diggings occurred in a grassy area in a barangay ironically called "Bliss."

The grisly, seven-hour operation ended at dusk with

HUMAN A10

One-armed 'Mac' joins Makati police

By Marlon Ramos

THE BOMB SQUAD OF THE Makati City police yesterday welcomed its most fearless recruit—a one-armed, two-foot tall, chemical-sensitive, right-seeing robot named "Mac."

And it's made of parts mostly sourced from Quiapo.

Mac—short for "mechanical antiterrorist concept"—is a

ONE-ARMED A13

THE COUNTRY'S first Explosive Disposal Robot (EDR) is unveiled during a field demonstration for police officials in Makati City Tuesday. The robot was built and designed by Mapua Institute of Technology engineering professors and students for the Makati City police force. AFP

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Low-pressure cloudy skies with scattered rain and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to mostly cloudy skies with isolated thunderstorms. (Thunderstorm warning issued by the Manila Observatory at 4 p.m.)

Metro Manila	Cloudy with rain in the...	Iloilo City	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with rain in the...	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with rain in the...	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with rain in the...	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Cloudy with rain in the...	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Zamboanga	Cloudy with rain in the...	Dumaguete	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with rain in the...	Basco	Partly Cloudy
Tagbilaran	Cloudy with rain in the...	General Santos	Partly Cloudy

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EZ2
2PM: 9 22
5PM: 25 11
SUERTRES
2PM: 5 9 7
5PM: 0 8 8
9PM: 4 1 4

SIX DIGIT (No winner today)
7 0 4 1 8 6

6/42 LUZ-VIS-MIN
1 5 19 32 35 40
P21,165,278.40

POWER LOTTO 6/55 + 1/18
12 16 18 20 52 + 3
P50,000,000.00

Petron disputes tax debt

Oil refiner questions P623-M assessment by Customs, will go to court

By Abigail L. Ho

OIL REFINER PETRON CORP. HAS REFUTED the Bureau of Customs' claim it owes the government P623.6 million in additional customs duties and taxes and inclusive of a two-time penalty for revenue loss.

In a regulatory filing, Petron corporate secretary Lucy Moghiya said the firm was questioning the BOC's final audit findings which showed the company owed P623.6 million for the period July 26, 2004, to June 26, 2007.

Moghiya said the oil firm had earlier asked the bureau to reconsider its findings.

"Petron awaits the action of the BOC on its request for reconsideration. If the request is denied or is not acted upon, Petron will exercise the matter to the Court of Tax Appeals," he said.

According to the BOC, Petron owed additional duties and value-added taxes since the oil firm used these exempt as the basis for computing the volume and value of its imported products, and not the invoices which would have shown the transaction value or actual price paid for the goods.

But Petron countered that a shore receipt was a more accurate measure of product volume, compared to an invoice.

"By their nature, petroleum products are valuable and their volume is greatly influenced by evaporation or changes in weather conditions while in transit or during discharge," Petron said.

The BOC also accused Petron of not paying taxes on the royalty payments it paid to Aramco.

In its defense, Petron said the royalty payments should not be included in the value of the imported base oils shipped with duties as the two figures were totally unrelated to each other.

"The royalties are computed at the agreed upon percentage of the tax rates value of the [blended] products manufactured and sold by [it]. The computation has no bearing at all on the imported base oils or their value and was not required as a condition for the sale of the base oil," Petron said.

Apart from its customs claim, the BOC also said Petron must pay additional duties and value-added taxes due to adjustments in insurance premiums paid on imported goods.

Petron argued, however, that the insurance premiums should not be adjusted to four percent of the freight-on-board value of the imported products, but should be taken at their actual value, which is lower than four percent. This is because the insurance payments are covered by official receipts for submission to the BOC, it said.

The BOC said the amount it was seeking from Petron should not have ballooned to P623.6 million, as two thirds of it consisted of penalties for alleged negligence.

To this, Petron replied: "There is no basis for imposing on Petron a 200 percent administrative fine. It was not negligent in filing the import entries since the rule of shore receipts was allowed by the BOC, not only for Petron but for the other oil companies."

Customs chief disowns Unioil raid

By Alcuin Papa

A BUREAU OF CUSTOMS (BOC) official who led members of the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PASG) in a raid on an oil depot in Batangas, reportedly had no business doing so, the BOC said yesterday.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales told reporters Port of Limay Collector Edward Bautista was under preventive suspension for three months on allegations of corruption.

Further, Morales said, the oil seized at the depot belonging to Unioil Petroleum Phils. had not been smuggled into the country.

"We have documents to prove Unioil paid the required duties and taxes amounting to P65,828,720," Morales said.

He urged PASG chief Undersecretary Antonio Villar to review their paperwork since Bautista may have deviated his regular microconducting the raid.

Morales said it was Unioil, a supposed client company of Unioil, that had tax arrears amounting to P27 billion and that Unioil could not be held liable for the other company's violations.

Morales said Bautista had been suspended without pay while the Ombudsman investigated allegations he had entered a municipality without authorization from the Limay port.

Bautista has been charged with grave misconduct for allegedly demanding P100,000 a month from importer Silver Dark Shipping Corp.

Morales said he had named Deputy Collector Ruperto Bulatao, aged officer in charge of the Limay port but Bulatao refused to assume his post.

"As far as the bureau is concerned, the case as [such] here is Bautista – he is under preventive suspension and had no authority to participate in the operation," Morales said.

He said the Unioil oil shipments were covered by the proper entry papers, examined, processed and cleared for release.

"There is no more time for the government," he said.

Morales, meanwhile, ordered Enforcement and Security Service (ESS) Director Nicasio Rachman Jr. to serve the suspension order on Bautista and arrest him should he resist.

Former NHA official found guilty of graft

By Marguin C. Ortiz

IT TOOK 21 YEARS, BUT THE SANDIGANbayan has found a former executive of the National Housing Authority (NHA) guilty of graft for authorizing the payment of illegal commissions to a supposed broker.

In 20 Oct. 0 ruling, the antigraft court's Third Division sentenced Jesse Kayanan, a former manager of NHA Commercial and Industrial Estate Department (CIED) to a six- to 10-year jail term.

The court said Kayanan had authorized the payment of P388,200 in illegal commissions to a supposed broker and then pocketed a large part of the amount in 1987.

The Sandiganbayan directed Kayanan to pay the government P258,200—the sum amount he deposited into his personal savings account.

Kayanan's co-accused, former CIED chief Hernando Andrada, had been cleared of any liability in 2002 for lack of evidence, while private defendant Concepcion Feliciano was acquitted on May 6, 2004.

Endorsed application

The antigraft court's records showed that Kayanan endorsed Feliciano's application to broker the purchase of a 6,854-square-meter commercial property along C-3 Road in Caloocan City in 1987.

The court noted that the lawyer-businesswoman Rhoda Guganzo Chiu, had submitted her application a month earlier without any mention of needing a broker.

Chiu had already paid a 30 percent deposit of P2.62 million and signed a 10-year purchase contract worth P8.72 million with 18 percent interest per year, according to the Sandiganbayan.

Upon Kayanan's endorsement, Chiu paid P388,200 to Feliciano as broker's commission on Dec. 17, 1987.

The following day Feliciano purchased a Philippine National Bank manager's check for P258,200 which prosecutors traced to Kayanan's personal account at the Asian Savings Bank, leading to his conviction for graft.

Japan grants RP P300M for disaster control

By Cynthia D. Balana

JAPAN HAS EXTENDED A GRANT OF P300 million in food disaster mitigation and education projects in the Philippines.

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Japanese Ambassador Makoto Katsura signed and exchanged notes on Monday on the two projects: the Improvement of Flood Forecasting and Warning System (FFWS) in the Pampanga and Agno river basins and the Japanese Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS).

The signing and exchanging of notes officially marked the appropriation of 376 million yen (P159 million pesos) for the second phase of the project on the improvement of FFWS and an additional 350 million yen (P160 million) to cover the seventh batch of Filipino scholars for academic year 2008-2014.

The improvement of FFWS in the Pampanga and Agno river basins is a project financed by the government of Japan through its Official Development Assistance (ODA). Already on its second phase, the project aims to restore the functions of existing FFWS that have been malfunctioning due to damage or deterioration, and includes the construction of various stations, radio networks and other facilities.

Improved data collection

According to Romulo, the project will improve data collection and the dissemination of clear and accurate flood information. It will also facilitate the development of hazard maps that will contribute to the safety and safe evacuation of people and property.

The JDS, a scholarship project financed by Japan through its ODA has been implemented in 11 countries including the Philippines. Between 2002 and 2007, Japan has allocated approximately two billion yen (P900 million) for the project.

Every year since the JDS project was implemented, 25 Filipino scholars go to Japan to pursue a two-year master's degree in selected fields like economics, information technology, public administration, industrial development and business administration to major host universities.

The project aims to enhance the scholars' expertise and help build a pool of human Filipino leaders who will contribute positively to the country's overall economic development.

To date, the Philippines has a total of 134 JDS fellows, including the latest batch of 25 scholars entering academic year 2008-2009.

Pinoy executed for murder in Saudi

By Cynthia D. Balana

AN OVERSEAS FILIPINO laborer was executed in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on Tuesday despite Philippine government efforts to save him, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. confirmed Analito Bidaya, also known as Veronico Lacdilen, was executed at 10 a.m. Saudi time (2 p.m. in Manila).

Bidaya was convicted of the murder of a Saudi national and was sentenced to death by the Jeddah Shariah's Grand Court in April 2007.

The death sentence was affirmed by the Tameez Court (Court of Appeals) and the Supreme Judicial Council (Supreme Court) on April 21, 2008, despite repeated appeals filed by the lawyers engaged by the Philippine consulate in Jeddah to represent Bidaya before the court of Makkah, the governor of Jeddah and the minister of interior.

Two letters

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself wrote two letters to King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on Dec. 6, 2007, and July 7, 2008, seeking clemency for Bidaya and for instances in convincing the victim's family to accept blood money and forgive him.

The victim's family, however, refused to forgive Bidaya but insisted on their right to "qisas" or the equivalent penalty.

Under Shariah Law, the crime of murder results to a public and private liability.

While the King of Saudi Arabia can forgive the public aspect of the case, he cannot extend clemency if the victim's family insists on their right of qisas.

The DFA has informed Bidaya's relatives of his fate and is coordinating with the Department of Labor and Employment to assist the family.

More doomed OFWs

In another case, the relatives of three OFWs whose death sentences by beheading have been affirmed by a Saudi court, wanted prayer vigils for them on Monday.

The families appealed to the government to save the lives of brothers Rolando and Edison Gonzales and Eduardo Acrilla.

The three could be executed any time this month, the Gonzalezes' sisters, Marie, said.

The Gonzalezes and Acrilla were charged with murdering Romeo Lumbang, Jerry Bernal and Dante Rivera in Jeddah in 2006. They said they were tortured into admitting the crime.

The court also sentenced four other OFWs — Filmer Ubongen, Joel Sinsuat, Omar Rasalio and Victor Alfonso — to 10 years in prison and 1,200 lashes each as accessories to the crime.

The seven men, including the three victims, are natives of Pampanga.

"The officials from the Philippine embassy there are helping them. No lawyers from our government were present when the second verdict was handed down," said Victor in Kapampangan.

She said Gov. Eddie Panlilio had asked the DFA to send a representative to a meeting with the men's families in Pampanga on Oct. 15. With a report from Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

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Persian Gulf island is limbo for OFWs

By Jolens B. Balarcinat
Contributor

ABU DHABI—STRANDED from long days of waiting and the anxiety of losing his job, Giovanni Garcia, 28, wept with joy when his employment finally rolled out of a bus stadium in a hotel in Rish island, Iran, last Tuesday.

Garcia, who hails from San Fernando, Cebu, hurried to book a flight back to the United Arab Emirates.

He is one of over 3,000 Filipinos who have found themselves stranded in Rish island and the Oman border when the UAE decided to crack down on Iranian nationals who work on a tourist or "visit visa."

Pilot Garcia and the others usually did stop to step out of the UAE for a few days then re-enter on another two-month visit visa. The hope is that eventually they will be granted a regular employment visa. But the UAE put a stop to the practice last July 29 and cracked down on overstaying overseas workers, many of them Filipinos.

Rish, a resort island dubbed Iran's "pearl in the Persian Gulf," and the border town of Nuratein in Oman are the two favorite exit points for expatriates, especially Filipinos, because of their proximity to the UAE.

It was Garcia's fifth exit since he began working in Abu Dhabi on Sept. 2, 2005 as a project engineer in a Singaporean-Malaysian construction company.

Except for one time last June when he returned to the Philippines, all his "visits" have been to Rish island.

He admitted that "it was hard and tenuous to work without entering an employment visa knowing the implications if we are caught." But he added that he decided to take the risk "rather than going back to the Philippines where I know I will suffer more."

"I am very grateful to my company who processed my employment visa," he told the Inquirer.

Garcia is one of the lucky ones. An estimated 2,100 Filipinos are still stranded in Rish while dozens to a thousand are in Oman, the Khaleej Times and Gulf News reported last week.

Donation boxes

Before finally heading for the airport, Garcia said he dropped Dh1,000 (about P15,000) in a donation box that aims to raise money for the Filipinos stranded on Rish island.

These donation boxes are seen prominently in hotel lobbies and restaurants where most Filipinos and other expatriates hang out while waiting for their visas.

"I have met many Filipinos whose tales were all traumatic and depressing. Some have stayed on the island for several months and even a year, and no help has come from the Philippine government.

Odd jobs

Some stranded Filipinos in the border areas have taken on odd jobs in hotels, restaurants and other establishments just to survive," he said.

Twenty-eight-year-old Joan Tampinco, an accountant, said the donations are used for Filipinos who have run out of money to pay for their hotel accommodations and food.

Tampinco, who hails from Butuan, said she hopes she was lucky to have gotten a re-entry visa in July, just before the strict new immigration rules fell.

Like Garcia, she too dropped an amount in the donation box to help those left behind.

Tampinco said she hoped the Philippine government would do something to help the stranded OFWs.

The donation boxes are labeled "Bantog Tabang Lang Po Para Sa Mga Pinoy na Nangangailangan ng Tulong (A little help for Filipinos who need help)."

Carla Cabaylen, 23, who has worked as an office girl in Rish island for over a year, said the boxes in the donation hotels are a lifeline for many.

Filipino newspapers who circulate occasionally in the island are considered heroes because of the large donations they usually drop in the "Bantog" boxes, Cabaylen said.

Adopted Pinoys

Cabaylen, a native of South Cotabato, said she has also frequently "adopted" Filipinos who seek shelter in her apartment when they can no longer afford to pay for hotel accommodations.

Hotels in Rish island charge at least 20 to 30 AED per day, depending on the number of people who stay in one room, she added.

Cabaylen said there was a time she missed sending money back home. "Yung sobrang pera ko ipinamimigay ko na lang sa mga Pinoy na nangangangailangan ng tulong kasi may urgent pang pangangailangan sa sahod ko pang nakalaan for deposition. Ang hirap pag walang mauutangan! I gave my entire money to the [stranded] Pinoys because their needs seemed more urgent...especially those having depressions."

"Alam ko naman may sahod na darating (I hope help comes before then)," she said.

Marissa Garcia, 28, a waitress stranded in the island for more than a month, blamed the Philippine government for failing to address their plight.

She said she was lucky to have found refuge with fellow Filipinos who are based on the island. She, too, is waiting for a new visa to be processed.

No jurisdiction

"Ang hirap talaga. Halos dalawang buwan na rin akong naka-stranded sa gitnang disyerto. Sana mapansin yung mga nasa ganito (It's really hard. I've been stranded in the middle of the desert for almost two months. I hope the government will notice those in our situation)," she said.

Benito Valentino, Philippine Consul-General in Dubai, was quoted in Gulf News in an article published last Sept. 28 as saying that he could not intervene in behalf of the stranded Filipinos in Rish and Oman because both areas are outside of his jurisdiction.

In Manila, the Philippine Government earlier announced that it was negotiating with the UAE in behalf of the stranded OFWs. *With reports from contributor Hilda Gallo*

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Cebu Pacific cuts 'Go-Lite' fares even more

LOW-COST CARRIER CEBU PACIFIC has indefinitely slashed its "Go Lite" year-round fare for certain regional and domestic services starting Oct. 15 to further stimulate the country's travel market.

The Go Lite fare structure, which Cebu Pacific introduced on Sept. 2, applies to passengers with no checked-in baggage and was created as part of a program to make aircraft lighter and hence burn less fuel. Those with check-in baggage simply add P200 to the ticket price. The year-round fare, on the other hand, refers to the lowest regular price for a service. Promo prices go lower than the year-round fare.

But with or without the "Go Lite" discount, Cebu Pacific's fares have definitely gone down.

The largest price drop applies to the one-way "Go Lite" fare from Manila to the Ilocos: a 75 percent decline from P1,799 to P399. The Manila-Bicol-Kalibo one-way "Go Lite" fare was also lowered to P399 from P799. That cross has done many long-haul bus services from Manila.

Cesperic vice president for marketing and distribution Candice Iyog said, "We are using this to provide affordable fares that will further stimulate travel. More importantly, our low fares will help our country draw more tourists to visit the Philippines." Nikko T. Dizon/Reporter

BI chief calls for cooperation vs trafficking

LIBANAN

THE BUREAU OF Immigration (BI) has called for stronger cooperation among government agencies in the fight against human trafficking.

In a statement sent to the Inquirer yesterday, Immigration Commissioner Marcelino C. Libanan said it was imperative for government agencies to work as a team so they could effectively put a stop to the exploitation of Filipino women and minors.

Libanan named the call to agencies such as the Philippine National Police (PNP), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the local government units (LGUs).

In the same statement, he denied news reports that he had passed on to the police the responsibility of going after alien perpetrators.

Initiated efforts

He clarified that he had initiated efforts for the BI and the PNP to work together in going after foreigners engaged in the flesh trade.

In the same statement, Rodyner Galang, Immigration associate commissioner and a retired PNP officer, said the BI had in place programs aimed at combating human trafficking in the country's ports of entry.

Galang said immigration officers at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Niaia) had offloaded hundreds of undocumented Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) attempting to leave the country in the guise of being tourists.

However, he said the bureau has experienced difficulty stemming the ban on the departure of "tourist workers" as the policy infringes on the right of every Filipino citizen to travel.

Involvement of PNP

"Commissioner Libanan has called for the involvement of barangay officials, the PNP and local government units in educating prospective victims about the risks and dangers they face if they leave and work abroad without proper documentation," Galang said in the statement.

As for aliens engaged in prostitution, Libanan stressed that the BI needs to work closely with the PNP to locating the undesirables, adding that prostitution itself is a criminal offense.

Libanan also said that even the most overzealous immigration officer at the airport would not be able to tell if a foreign woman who arrives is a prostitute or not, hence she cannot simply be turned away especially if her travel documents are in order.

PAGASA IMMUNE

Court junks Sulpicio suit

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A MANILA CITY JUDGE dismissed yesterday a damage suit filed by Sulpicio Lines against the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) finding no basis to the claim that the weather bureau's "wrong forecasting" had caused the tragedy that befell the MV Princess of the Stars.

In a 5-page decision, Manila Regional Trial Court branch 25 Judge Silvino Pampilo Jr. junked the 199,490-million damage claim of Sulpicio Lines Inc. and Edgar Go against Pagasa and its officials Prisco Nilo and Nathaniel Cruz, primarily relying on the doctrine that the state cannot be sued without its consent.

"It is clear from the law creating Pagasa that it is performing a government function, hence immune from suit," Pampilo wrote in his decision.

Pagasa officials Nilo and Cruz said they will be held personally liable because "as a general rule, an officer of the government may not be held personally liable if he performs or acts within the scope of his official duties and within the scope of his assigned tasks," the decision said.

Pampilo said he was convinced that bad faith, malice or gross negligence were not sufficiently established in the acts performed by Nilo and Cruz.

Sulpicio Lines claimed that Pagasa's wrong forecasting was done with gross incompetence and irresponsibility and that the shipping company decided to proceed with operations because the weather bureau's bulletin 10 had "wrongly and stubbornly" announced that typhoon 'Frank' was headed west-northwest when it was actually going west.

The shipping company further claimed, "The inexcusable neglect of duty and gross incompetence of the defendants directly caused Mr Dilsenia of the fleet to sail into the eye of the typhoon and directly causing the vessel to capsize resulting in countless loss of lives."

However, Pampilo cited the persistence of Sulpicio Lines to set sail on June 20 while the other shipping companies opted to suspend their operations because of typhoon 'Frank.'

"The members of the Board of Marine Inquiry (BMI) had a decision of fore," he added.

The judge stressed that Pagasa "had not been remiss and it had no motive in issuing the weather bulletins... Definitely, Sulpicio Lines is to blame although this is what we call an act of God."

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Corrections

IN THE OCT 11 ISSUE, a front-page headline — "250,000 are more deserving of pardon?" — misstated the number of lone Bilibid Prison inmates considered by the prison chaplain to be more deserving of executive clemency than convicted murderer Claudio Teehankee Jr. Msgr. Robert Olaguer said 26 percent of almost 26,000 inmates or 4,000 — not 250,000 inmates — were more deserving of executive clemency.

* * *

IN THE OCT 12 ISSUE, Patricia Evangelista's "Rebel Without A Clue" column on Page A13 of the Opinion section — "Forevermo" — misquoted that Ambassador Manuel Yorkadee is the older brother of Claudio Teehankee Jr. The ambassador is the younger brother of Yorkadee Jr.

* * *

IN THE OCT 14 ISSUE, a front-page story — "Orient groups bring Zppa to SC" — misstated that Gov. Francis Escudero voted for the ratification of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement. Escudero voted against the ratification of Jppa.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Ray Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Building, Chino Roces Avenue extension, Makati City, Makati City, fax No. 897-47-02, e-mail address: ray.desk@inquirer.com.ph.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, October 15, 2008
28th Week in Ordinary Time
Teresa of Avila

1st Reading: Gal 5:18-25
Gospel: Lk 11:42-46

Jesus said, "A curse is on you, Pharisees, for the Temple you give a tenth of all, including mint and rue and the other herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. This ought to be practiced, without neglecting the other. A curse is on you, Pharisees, for you love the best seats in the synagogues and to be greeted in the marketplaces. A curse is on you for you are like tombstones of the dead which we hardly see and people don't notice them and make themselves useless by stepping on them."

Then a teacher of the Law spoke up and said, "Master, when you speak like this, you insult us, too." And Jesus answered, "A curse is on you also, teachers of the Law, for you prepare unbearable burdens and load them on the people, while you yourselves don't even lift a finger to help them."

Commentary

Jesus continues his criticisms of the Pharisees by pointing out their hypocrisy. They are concerned only with "herbs," and neglect the fundamental commandment to love their neighbor.

All of our outward religious observances in the end are for naught unless we serve others in the well-being of others, especially those less fortunate than ourselves. We cannot show God the respect and reverence that is His due unless we also show respect for His children — our brothers and sisters in the human family. Love and service to others is the hallmark of discipleship, the means by which others will know that we truly love the Lord.

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AFP-PNP OLYMPICS

The curtains of the Air Force meet in sportsmen at the Camp Aguinaldo parade grounds during yesterday's parade of athletes kicking off the AFP-PNP Olympics, an annual sportsfest revived after five years. The four-week competition is designed to forge camaraderie among soldiers and policemen. Set to run until Nov. 11, the inter-service sportsfest will include archery and soldiers competing in traditional events such as basketball, badminton, volleyball, cycling, track and field, boxing, softball, wrestling, chess and marksmanship. "It's inspiring to see the AFP and the PNP coming together to forge camaraderie," Armed Forces Chief of Staff Alexander Yano told the competing teams.

A SOLIDARITY STATEMENT WITH THE FILIPINO PEOPLE ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH BILL NO. 5043

We, the members of Couples for Christ Foundation for Family and Life in Europe (CFC-FFL Europe) are very distressed about the contents of the Reproductive Health Bill currently being discussed by the Congress of the Philippines. Many of us in CFC-FFL Europe were born and raised in the Philippines, and still consider it our homeland. Some of us are Europeans who have developed an emotional bond with the Philippines, due to the love and regard which our Filipino brethren rightly have for their motherland.

In unity with our physical and spiritual brethren in the Philippines, we in CFC-FFL Europe want to express our conviction that Reproductive Health Bill No. 5043 is bad for the Philippines and bad for Filipinos. Although many of the provisions mentioned in the bill may sound harmless or even praiseworthy on the surface, we know (based on the experience of formerly pro-life countries in Europe) that these same points of law will be the wedge used by anti-life forces to drive a crack, and eventually an irreparable breach, in the rights which are currently enshrined in the Constitution of the Philippines. These rights are the equal protection of the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from the moment of conception; the right of spouses to found a family in accordance with their religious convictions and the demands of responsible parenthood; and the natural and primary right and duty of parents in the development of the moral character of their children, to name just a few.

We see how the Culture of Death is running rampant in the cultures of Europe. They have exchanged Christianity for secularism. There is little respect for God, for life, for the Church, for family, for sexuality. Europe is now at serious risk of eventual annihilation because of low birth rates, an aging population, aggressive contraception and legal abortion.

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For more information, visit: **http://www.cfcffl.org**

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PDEA to probe cops on West Crame drugs

By Tarra Quismundo

THE PHILIPPINE DRUG ENforcement Agency (PDEA) is looking into the possibility that some policemen are protecting the illegal drug trade right outside Camp Crame, the Philippine National Police (PNP) headquarters in Quezon City.

PDEA information chief Derrick Carreon said yesterday that the agency has been receiving anonymous tips pointing to policemen as the protectors of the major drug network in Barangay West Crame.

Carreon said they were also probing the reported widespread use of illegal drugs in an adjacent San Juan village.

"We're not pointing to anyone but we are conducting a deeper investigation because we have received information that there might be protectors from the ranks," he said.

Last week, the PDEA Special Enforcement Service busted four drug suppliers in Barangay West Crame.

"Most are small time street peddlers who turn their houses into drug dens," said Carreon.

According to Carreon, some drug-dependent parents were reported to have abused their children after pot hits.

PDEA has launched drug awareness seminars in the area in a bid to curb the drug problem. The agency will also coordinate with the PNP to investigate the problem.

Airport execs seeking ISO certification

By Jovanie Aning

CUE

AIRPORT OFFICIALS YESterday called on government and private agencies housed at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport to work together so that the country's premiere gateway could meet internationally accepted standards.

Alfonso Cusi, Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) general manager, said the agency is working on making "predictable" the airport's processes, mainly those pertaining to arrival and departure.

"We're putting into a manual all these processes and standards to be maintained by airport agencies at any given time," Cusi explained.

Miaa officials, however, said getting an ISO certificate depends on the cooperation and resolve of all government and private agencies working at the Asia-complex.

Extra smile

"[It] hinges on full cooperation and resolve of all employees, government agencies, airlines, concessionaires and service providers in the terminal as a united front for total quality and passenger satisfaction," Tito Serrano, Miaa assistant general for airport development and corporate affairs, told reporters.

Serrano, who also heads Miaa's ISO Quality Management System team, sounded urgent statement to practice the "go the extra mile" service branding, referring to the agency's drive to make Naia the safest and most friendly airport in the country.

Cusi, for his part, said there was a need to "build a culture of excellence among the various work forces operating inside our passenger terminals, conscious of the ideals and requirements of public service, in attain total passenger delight."

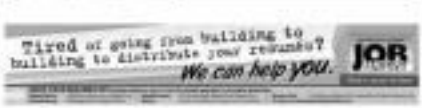
Miaa has embarked on a series of activities to obtain an ISO Certificate, which is awarded by the International Standards Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. The world body, established in 1947, promulgates worldwide proprietary industrial and commercial standards that are favored by governments and private enterprises.

Airport auditors

Airport officials on Monday moves to offset 10 internal quality auditors who are tasked with monitoring Naia airport agencies apply their submitted processes.

Miaa recently signed Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with agencies such as the Bureau of Customs, Bureau of Immigration, National Bureau of Investigation, Department of Tourism and the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

The SLAs spell out performance measures for each agency for prompt and quality services for Naia passengers. It also officially ties the observance of agency procedures within the airport particularly the passenger facilitation process at Naia Terminal 1.



Human bone in Bataan camp

From page A1

group praying at a makeshift altar bearing a cross, flowers and lighted candles.

As they prayed, Manalo began to weep.

It was in the same area where, the 27-year-old Manalo said that his uncle Reynaldo and his brother Reynaldo were also tortured by their captors.

Dr. Francisco Baraz, head of a four-man team from the DFA Anthropology Department, described the discovery of what they believed to be a human bone as a "breakthrough."

But he said he would no longer be able to identify whose bone it was because it had already been "unboxed."

4 cm long

Danao said the bone was so burned that he would not be able to extract DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) samples from it.

The team also included members of the militant human rights group Karapatan, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), and the Senate committee on justice.

Their discoveries came on the the second day of their excavation in the village where Manalo said was used as an encampment by a former detachment of the Army's 24th Infantry Battalion.

Top military commanders in northern and central Luzon yesterday said they did not know if the 24th IB had maintained a detachment in Limay.

The bigger of the fragments of suspected human bone measured 4 cm long.

After the wet soil was wiped off from the digger, Manalo told the fact-finding group without hesitation that it belonged to the missing Merlin, whom he referred to as "Tay Maynard."

Emperor's shirt

Manalo said the burnt shirt, found a few feet away, belonged to Empeno, whose companion, Artist-IP activist Sherlyn Cadapan, has also been missing for two years.

"Nahubaran ako ng loob [My spirit was lifted]," Manalo told the lawyers after the bone was found.

Manalo admitted his confidence began to waver when the team failed to find anything significant on the first day despite hours of digging in the area which he claimed were the graves of the victims.

"If we don't find anything, they [military] will all the more deny what I have said," he added.

It was Manalo who had led the team in the area in a secluded, forested area in Blue zone. It has been the Limay town proper, where he said he was detained and tortured, along with his brothers Reynaldo, Merlin, and the UP activists from November 2006 to June 2007.

Manalo claimed he also saw around eight other men being brought to the detachment either dead or dying.

The supposed burial sites were several meters apart. In one of them, the group unearthed what looked like a bare mattress.

Then an anthropologist found the fragment that Danao later said was a human bone.

Danao said that if scientists had indeed been hoaxed there, the body could have been either wrapped in the mattress or smuggled between mattresses.

Lab tests

The recovered items will be subjected to laboratory tests.

CHR lawyer Emilio Wehbe said the results of the lab tests would determine how the agency's investigation of the Manalo case would proceed. He said the CHR had confirmed the area was a former encampment of the 24th IB.

"I would not know about it. The deployment of troops and their camps are with the battalion commanders," Lt. Gen. Ingrid Gudoselo, chief of the military's Northern Luzon Command, said when asked about the existence of an Army detachment in Bilia.

Maj. Gen. Ralph Villanueva, commander of the 7th Infantry Division, which has control over the 24th IB, said: "As of now, I have no knowledge. I really have to find out."

Lt. Col. Philip Lapitad, executive commander of the 24th IB, said the unit had put up a detachment in Barangay Dambo, not in Barangay Bilia. He said the previous commander, Col. Felipe Dacoudo, told him that the battalion had not established a detachment in Bilia.

In a telephone interview, Anatalio said the battalion only put up a detachment in Dinalo. He said he never saw or talked to the Manalo brothers during the time they were supposedly held in Bilia. With a report from Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

RAYMOND Manalo (left), weeps over the makeshift grave of Manuel Merlin, who was allegedly buried by Army soldiers in Limay, Bataan. Manalo is accompanied by a member (center) of the fact-finding team from the Commission on Human Rights.

One-armed 'Mac' joins Makati police

From page A1

100-percent Filipino-made gizmo to be deployed next time the city first hosts the country's financial center and a number of foreign executives cancel their threat of another big bang.

"With Mac around, hostiles of policemen will be assured that their loved ones will come home alive," said John Joshua, one of the robot's creators from the Mapua Institute of Technology.

"Mac will make our job safer. He will take on assignments which could endanger the lives of our policemen," Senior Insp. Gilbert Cruz, the Makati police chief, said during Mac's unveiling as a park fronting the Glorietta 4 mall.

The robot comes equipped with four cameras, all capable of night vision, and moves around on four rubber wheels. Its mechanical arm—which gives Mac an almost scorpion-like form—can safely handle explosive materials as heavy as 20 kilos or as thick as four inches.

The whole system runs on a rechargeable, 12-volt battery and only requires one human operator who can control Mac's movements by cable from a safe distance of up to 100 meters.

The 80-kilogram Mac is mainly encased in fiber glass, with a body suited of glass cuts by three feet.

Sir Cruz, the investigators of the Oct. 19, 2007, blast at Glorietta 2—which officials insisted to have been caused by an industrial accident and not by a terrorist attack—could have been easier if Mac was already operational at the time.

This is because Mac can also "measure the intensity of the air during a chemical explosion," Cruz said.

Before Mac can see action in the field, however, its creators led by Joshua will be bringing it to Shanghai today in order for robot in the First World Cup on Computers implemented tomorrow.

Joshua said Mac was actually the fourth robot his team had created for the armed services. The Filipino engineers earlier developed three "unmanned gunners" for Philippine Navy vessels.

Cruz said the Makati police became the first local law enforcement unit to employ robotics. The officer, who counts himself as a fan of sci-fi movies and the Discovery Channel, said he thought of deploying robots on battles dealt with arresting "bomb-carrier" in the city.

He said his friends disposal unit was in response to an average of two bomb threats a week. Makati being home to a number of foreign embassies and corporate headquarters.

In a month, Cruz said, his men usually rescue at least eight "disposal"—either real bombs or duds—into.

When a friend told him about a group of robotic engineers from Mapua, Cruz said, he immediately contacted Joshilla, the former head of the university's mechanical engineering department.

"Fortunately, they were also eager to embark on the project when I told them about it," Cruz told the inquirer.

Since the Philippines National Police did not have funds to bankroll such projects, Cruz asked for private sponsors, particularly among companies located in the city. In a matter of weeks, he received pledges from Philippine Airlines, San Miguel Corp.—and the Makati City government.

Cruz said at least P800,000 have already been spent on Mac, which Joshilla described to be a work in progress.

Joshilla said his team took about nine months to design and build Mac. "We can proudly say that this robot is completely Filipino made," he said.

Many of the components were bought from that famous row of electronics shops in Quiapo and Raon in Manila, he added.

"We're still developing some of Mac's added features. We might replace Mac's toes with [trolley wheels] so he can walk up the stairs," Joshilla said. "His lightweight robot can easily be transported and used anywhere."

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Should you have any adverse claim with respect to the said stock certificate, please contact Atty. Michael Medina, Director – Tax and Corporate Affairs, eVolcom Global Solutions, Inc. at (632) 892-6917.

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Film on OFWs moves Pinoys in Netherlands

A FILM ABOUT THE PLIGHT OF OVERseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) recently earned praise in the Netherlands, the forepassers of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

The movie "Ina ...Anak...Iisa|Iba," produced with a modest budget, developed the theme that OFWs and the loved ones they left behind should work to strengthen their family bonds.

In his report to the DFA, Philippine Ambassador to The Netherlands Rolando Arguelles, who graced the premier showing of the movie at the Lumiere Cinema in Maastricht, said many Filipinos and their Dutch partners were emotionally affected by its theme.

Arguelles said the film reminded the families of OFWs left behind to value the hard-earned money sent by their loved ones abroad.

Aside from the showing in Maastricht, another premier was also conducted the day before in Amsterdam, where OFWs were also given lessons in financial literacy.

At the end of both film showings, an open forum brought out concerns of Filipinos and their foreign spouses about the need for financial planning, not only by the Filipinos working abroad but also by the family he or she leaves behind.

Arguelles said the twin showing in the Netherlands drew more than 150 guests, and was made possible by Blue Streak Assurance, Inmobiliv (Director of OFWBA/Overseas Workers and Compatriots Initiatives Inc. Cynthia O. Badana

NHA turns 33

THE NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY (NHA) marks 33 years of providing affordable and decent shelter to homeless poor Filipinos today, kicking off a weeklong celebration revolving around the theme, "The Power to Build ... Committed, Conserved, Connected."

The NHA, in a press statement, said the past three years (2005-2007) saw the marked increase in the production of housing units with 40,000 units surpassing the previous two year average of 25,000 units.

NHA General Manager Federico A. Lim said the production upswing was the result of housing beneficiaries' increase in confidence in the government's housing program, particularly the mid-rise/medium program which comprises the bulk of NHA production since 2005.

The NHA anniversary celebration actually kicked off with the opening of a photo exhibit on Blvd Calamity Resistance Rebuild, entitled Efforts (CARE) program and Southville resettlement communities and product exhibit of NHA beneficiaries on Monday at the NHA main building in Diliman, Quezon City.

Tomorrow, Vice President Noli de Castro, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, will be the guest of honor during a tree-planting activity spearheaded by the United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) QC Elliptical Chapter in Southville 3 (New Bilibid Prison Housing Project), Muntinlupa.

He Cares together with NHA officials and inter-agency members will hold a salubo with residents of Southville 3.

Other anniversary activities are sports exhibition games, entrepreneurship training for NHA personnel, Gender and Development (GAD) on-the-spot painting contest and slogan writing contest.

The celebration will culminate on Friday with a thanksgiving Mass, the conferment of loyalty awards and awarding of the winners for sports competitions, GAD slogan writing contest and GAD on-the-spot painting contest.

APAC REPORT

President Macapagal-Arroyo receives from Roberto Ongpin, chairman of the APEC Business Advisory Council (Abac) Philippines, the 2008 Report to APEC Leaders following a similar presentation by current overall Abac chairman Jusuf Wanandi to the current Apec chairman, President Alan Garcia of Peru. Abac is the private sector arm of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) made up of business leaders from the respective Apec member economies. The other Philippine representatives to Abac are Doris Magsaysay Ho, president and CEO of Magsaysay Group of Companies and Arthur Ty, president of Metro Bank. In its latest report Abac identified new major areas which need policy attention – a change in regulatory focus and an increased emphasis on transparency.

Research head urges: Give nuke a 2nd look

By Miko Morales

IF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ONLY HAD the will, the Philippines could go nuclear and get closer to attaining its goal of energy independence, according to the head of the country's nuclear research agency.

Toward this end, Philippine Nuclear Research Institute Director (PNRI) Dr Alexander de la Rosa said the PNRI would be updating its regulations and retraining its staff in case the government goes ahead and opens the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP).

"What [government officials] need to do is [assert] political will, after that everything will follow," Dr de la Rosa told the Inquirer in an interview.

"We [taxpayers] have paid for it (BNPP). It will just go to waste if we don't give it a second look," she said.

Last week, Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago filed a bill mandating the "immediate and commercial operation" of the BNPP, which was built during the Marcos regime but was never used. Its construction was also stranded by accusations of large-scale corruption in the highest places.

Santiago said the bill supports the plant on the basis of "the country's need for additional power."

Make plant rehab

De la Rosa said the National Power Corp. (Napocor), on the recommendation of the International Atomic Energy Administration (IAEA), was studying the feasibility of rehabilitating the BNPP.

"The Department of Energy asked the IAEA to assist us in deciding whether or not to rehabilitate [the BNPP] and the recommendation of the IAEA was a thorough investigation to determine the technical integrity of the structure," she said.

De la Rosa disclosed that at least three nuclear power plants similar to the BNPP were built in other countries around the same time in 1984 and these were still "operating safely" today.

"We know there are three nuclear plants of the same design, built at the same time as Bataan's and [they] are operating safely," she said. These are in South Korea, Brazil and Slovenia, formerly a part of Yugoslavia.

De la Rosa said some nuclear power plants in the United States older than the BNPP were also still in operation.

"In the US, some [nuclear plants] about 40 years old ... have been given government approval to operate for another 20 years," she said. "There could have been upgrades and some parts changed through the lifetime of the plants but in terms of technology it's still the same."

As for opening the BNPP, De la Rosa said the PNRI had time "to train people" and, as a regulatory, "our training is continuous in terms of nuclear power."

"We only have to update the regulations," she said. "Not that [they] are obsolete... we have to keep updated vis a vis the IAEA-recommended standards."

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OPINION

Judas' followers

EDITORIAL

THE ONLY REAL JOB THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES has at present is to amend to the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

That's because the House has the power of the purse. Every year, its fundamental task is to pass the national budget so that government as a whole can function. It has accomplished this for all intents and purposes, having passed the 2006 budget on second reading. That being done, this leaves the House with no other main business except oversight.

Congress engages in oversight both over the Executive Branch and the laws of the land (investigating in aid of legislation is to exercise oversight over sitting officials, with the concrete objective of improving laws which only Congress can do). Part of this oversight power is to satirically tackle the political question, which is generally beyond the scope of our courts, of whether the chief executive remains fit or held either.

Speaker Prospero Nograles and other House leaders have been telling the public that the charges against the President in the latest impeachment complaint are old, rehashed, and irrelevant because those who face it lack the numbers necessary to force its transmittal to the Senate. They may be correct in saying that few congressmen are interested in voting in favor of turning the charges into articles of impeachment. But they are incorrect in arguing the charges are old or have been previously resolved. They have not.

In the first place, the charges pertaining to the 2004 elections have never been resolved. All that was resolved there before was that, in the eyes of the House majority, the charges weren't fit for their consideration. That is different from determining the need or fully prosecute those charges.

Saying there are all old charges or rehashed information is also incorrect. The complaint's human rights charges, for example, restates the determination of the Supreme Court that Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan was involved in the abduction of the Manalo brothers.

The complaint's allegations also include things that only happened last year, when bughis of recovery were handed to provincial officials and congressmen. The House may want to take a rest from shrugging this off but it only fortifies the allegations of a conspiracy between its overwhelmingly and the Executive to subvert the Constitution.

The North Rail and ZTE scandals as well as twice-in-thorny swindle are also new. They transpired after the past three impeachment efforts that failed. That piled on top of the past cases of omissions and commission of the President and her people are new ones with an ever-widening cast of disreputable characters, including many members of the ruling coalition in both Houses of Congress.

To this, Nograles and his acolytes can only say, well, the economy is facing a crisis, and so the timing is all wrong.

But the timing was not determined by the complainants. It was determined by the Constitution, Congress and the courts. The Constitution is blind to world or local events with regard to impeachment, because impeachment is about external constitutional principles: public office is a public trust, and no official, including the head of state, is entitled to stay in office if he or she betrays that trust, regardless of competence, or even the original term for which he or she has been elected.

Sticking done its main job to pass the national appropriations bill, the House is duty-bound to exercise oversight by determining if the public official who will have the biggest say in how that budget is spent remains qualified to do so. And the past conduct of the President is entirely material and relevant to this determination. Can the President be trusted with a P1.4 trillion budget if the stands accused of essentially being a lawless, faithless, unscrupulous, and downright dishonest usurper?

This is what the members of the House must find the time and energy and political will to do. Otherwise they risk setting the stage for a poisonous, destructive settling of political scores in 2010, when they cannot say they merely denied the bedrock principles of democracy thrice, as three denied Christ thrice. There was no fourth denial for Peter, but House leaders have declared their readiness to follow Judas on the road to political perdition.

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Animal welfare societies need help

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

LAST OCTOBER 4 WAS WORLD ANIMAL DAY, and there were blessings of pets in many parts of the Philippines, duly reported by media. But while that was going on, dogs were (not) dutifully being devoured in the city pound of Cagayan de Oro under the supervision of the city veterinarian. In Bacolod City, all people. The veterinarian, Dr. Bella de Asis, and Mayor Constantino Jaraula, as well as other city officials, should have known better. There are other, more humane ways of putting animals to sleep, such as lethal injection. Every veterinarian knows this.

Every public official should also know that subjecting animals to cruelty, including killing them by cruel means such as drowning, is prohibited by the RA 8485, or the Animal Welfare Act of 1998, and that the vet as well as CDO officials can be prosecuted for such cruelty.

The electrocute mails are burning with protests from citizens against this cruelty to animals and CDO, supposedly a civilized city, has turned a black eye for it. The mayor should do something to make amends and make his city catch up with the 21st century.

Let's face it, the Philippines is faced with the problem of stray dogs, due mainly to irresponsible owners. Communities, homeowners associations, barangays, municipal and city governments have the responsibility of rounding up the stray dogs because they raise the risk of spreading rabies. But once you have rounded them up, what do you do with them?

Most municipalities barangay, municipal and city officials will then to dog meat farms who resell them to outside to specializing in dog meat. This is also prohibited by the Animal Welfare Act.

Most city pounds lady very few cities have city pounds), after waiting a few days for the owners to get back their pets and pay the fines, put the unclaimed dogs to death! The common method is by gassing them with carbon monoxide from the engine of a van. This takes about 20 minutes—too long for the CDO ers. Drowning takes only five minutes, so the vet resorted to it. But a dog dies a very cruel death by drowning.

And the CDO drownings were done in a landfill, in full view of the public, including children. They witnessed the horrifying sight of the dogs desperately thrashing, trying to breathe, while their heads were held under water. That's what we are teaching our children!

Ironically, the private animal welfare societies are doing much better than government units. The Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) rescues abandoned dogs and cats, gives them veterinary care, trains them to be family pets, and puts them up for adoption by responsible families. Care and Responsibility for Animals, in adding that the population explosion of stray dogs and cats could be minimized if owners they can spayed and neutered, picks up strays, sterilizes them, and releases them. They continue to be strays but at least they don't multiply. Another private organization, I forget the name, rescues dogs from dog meat farms.

Those assisted welfare societies get no subsidies from the government, national or local, although they are doing what the government should be doing. They live entirely from private donations. The LGUs should ask them to work those what to do with strays and throw those who refuse to maintain their operations as part of the bargain.

* * *

PAWS is one animal welfare organization in dire need of help. It takes care of abandoned pets and puts them up for adoption. It provides free, or almost free, veterinary care. It gives free spaying and neuter free advice on responsible pet ownership. It survives entirely on private donations by animal lovers. Its animal rescue center is staffed by volunteers who don't get any pay. It doesn't get any assistance from the government. It is paying P10,000 a month to rent a lot owned by Mercedes to Lourdes Aragon where it has its animal rescue center.

Lately, donations have been drying up, probably because of the dire economic conditions and PAWS operations have been cramped. The regular veterinarians had to be let go, and it now has only volunteer vets on call. It needs more volunteer staff members at the rescue center. It needs donations of funds, food, medicine, old dog collars and leashes—any thing your own pets don't need anymore.

In this Christmas, the season of gift-giving and prayer and goodwill to men—and animals—think not only of the humans to give gifts to. Share the gift of life to abandoned animals. After all, the first companions of Baby Jesus in the stable in Bethlehem were animals.

For years, we have been giving gifts to our friends through PAWS. Instead of giving gifts that they probably don't want and need, we donate to PAWS in the name of our friends. PAWS sends Christmas cards telling them that we have donated to their names and thanking them for it. Most of our friends send us notes, thanking us for the gifts, saying it is a good idea. This can be the same thing. Give gifts to your friends and relatives by donating to PAWS and give help to abandoned animals that desperately need help. They will be grateful appreciated and the act will give you a happy feeling.

A few nights ago, ABS-CBN aired a documentary on our School Businessmen—Lucio Tan, Gokongwei, Ayala, etc.—and their investor-charitable projects. None of them has any project for abandoned pets, although at least two of them—the Consepcions and Gaw Miguel Gaw Jr.—own racehorses and well-stocked farms. How devastly we need is that a few of them will throw a few crumbs to the animals and the welfare societies which care for them.

Merry Christmas!

Kidnapped

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

ON FRIDAY, JAMES BALAO WILL HAVE BEEN gone for a month.

On Sept. 17 last month, James left his home in Pasteros, Baguio, at 7 a.m. He was wearing a black jacket, brown pants, hiking boots, eyeglasses and a visor. He was carrying a yellow and blue backpack and a travelling bag. He was on his way to his family's residence in Trinidad Valley. He hasn't been seen since.

Eyewitnesses would later say he was kidnapped in Trinity, La Trinidad. He was standing on the roadside, when a van pulled up in front of him and several men jumped out and captured him. They handcuffed him and pushed him inside the van. One man turned to the crowd of onlookers and shouted, "Wag kayong makialam, drug pusher 'to, dadalhin namin sa Camp Dangwa." (Don't interfere, this is a drug pusher, we're bringing him to Camp Dangwa.)

James Balao, born 1961 and the eldest of four children, is one of the founding members of the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA), established in 1984 during the pit of martial law. A graduate of UP Baguio, he has devoted a lifetime to studying and fighting for the rights of the indigenous folk of the Cordillera, particularly rights pertaining to ancestral domain. In 1986 he was on the staff of Jose Sevagan and helped write the draft of the Organic Autonomous bills in the Constitution. At the time of his abduction, he was chairman of the Cordillera Claw Association, and one of his tasks was to look into the registration of this properties.

UP Baguio says of him: "We are proud of James Balao. He ... lives realizes the wisdom of UPB's focus on Cordillera studies, which the university has always had. And its choice to utilize the UP honors and its relevance to the region in the early 1980s, decided to take. James' decision to forego opportunities to distinguish himself and establish a brilliant career in civilian academia and professional arena for which his many talents and gifts amply prepared him in favor of a relentless and exclusively responsible commitment to regional development and social well-being, is a grand affirmation of UPB's institutional mission. (He has made) academic work and public service programs responsive and relevant to Cordillera concerns."

This is the person who was abducted last month. UP Baguio names operatives of the Intelligence Security Unit (ISU) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines as the perpetrators. Since his abduction, I've had several friends call, e-mail, and text me wondering for the credibility of the report and high-mindedness of this man. Like James Bangue, he is an epic lover to country, or since "society" is an abstraction, he is an epic lover to all of us who dream of a better world to leave to our children. (One is a drug pusher, it is only in that he pushes the kind of drugs decent men, including priests, experimental ones to serve a country in extremis. I join James' kin and friends in hoping he is still alive, despite being held in some hellhole by his captors.

It's time we cried "Enough" through of the killings, enough of the abductions, enough of the disappearances, enough of the harassment, enough of the surveillance, enough of the torturing of fear, enough of the terrorism, enough of the culture of impunity, enough of the reign of impunity.

It's the very least that is to become we are the only country left in the part of the world that's still fighting a war against communism. At a time when the communists are no longer poised to overrun the country as a time when the communist ideology no longer sounds a siren's call to the youth as it once did, at a time communism is more the world history museum piece than parliamentary, rather than armed, struggle. Indeed, at a time when the very government of this country is desperate to look, pawn and sell the national patrimony to the only communist power left in this world, which is China. You can't get any more hysterically hypocritical than that.

It's a cynical war waged by corrupt administrations keep their cynical rulers in power. It has no other purpose than to allow them to hide the real threat to this country, which is dictatorship, and to unleash the forces unveiled to prop it up, which are fear and violence. It's a cynical war that's fanning a cynical left on the rampage.

But more than the innocent, it's taking its toll on the country's best and brightest. James Balao got it one of them. James Balao is another. They are people who have been given direction skills and endowments. Baguio has the illustrious name of his father to carry and Balao the glorious traditions of his tribe to do so. They could have become "successful" professionals, with enough trophies and testimonials to proclaim the fact. Instead, they chose to serve the people... Born powerfully that phrase reverberates in resonate among those who have internalized it—unsurprising their talents and energies for the benefit of their communities. With only the laughter to the eyes of the children and the gratitude in the faces of their parents to proclaim their successes.

If that is what it means to be a communist, then let us all become communists. If that is what it means to be an enemy of the people, then let us all become enemies of the people.

But what insanity that Norberto Gonzales, the stoop who once tried to hire an American company to lobby the US Congress to change the Philippine Constitution, should have the power to arrest others, as enemies of the state, people and who is critical to them. What insanity that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the illegitimate president who wants to enter into illegitimate deals with China to kill off the country, should have the power to decree who lives and who dies.

On Friday, James Balao, pride of UP Baguio, pride of the Cordillera, and pride of the Filipino nation, will have been gone for a month.

Anatomy of a crisis

WORLD VIEW

Barry Eichengreen

BERKELEY—GETTING OUT OF OUR CURRENT financial mess requires understanding how we got into it in the first place. The fundamental cause, according to the likes of John McCain, was greed and corruption on Wall Street. Though no one to deny the existence of such base motives, I would insist that the cupidity in question preyed on deeper economic structuring back over decades.

In the United States, there were two key decisions. The first, in the 1970s, deregulated commissions paid to stockbrokers. The second, in the 1980s, removed the Glass-Steagall Act's restrictions on mixing commercial and investment banking. In the days of fixed commissions, investment banks could make a comfortable living banking stock trades. Deregulation meant commissions shrank and margins disappeared. Elimination of those firewalls then allowed commercial banks to encroach on the investment banks' other traditional preserves.

In response, investment banks branched into new businesses like originating and distributing complex derivative securities. They borrowed money and put it to work to earn on their profitability. That gave rise to the first canyon of the crisis: the origination and distribute model of securitization, which led to an explosion in risk.

It is important to note that these were unintended consequences of basically sensible policy decisions. Other things being equal, deregulation of stock brokerage commissions made the industry safer. Banks made those better off. But other things were not equal. In particular, the fact that investment banks, which were propelled into riskier activities by those policy changes, were entirely outside the regulatory net was a recipe for disaster.

Similarly, eliminating Glass-Steagall was fundamentally sensible. Conglomerates allow financial institutions to diversify their business, and centralizing commercial banks allows investment banks to fund their operations using riskfree, stable deposits instead of flighty money-market funds. This model has proven its stability in Europe over a period of centuries, and its advantages are evident in the US even now with Bank of America's purchase of Merrill Lynch.

But deregulation unleashed consequences. The failure of US regulators to tighten capital and funding standards when abundant capital inflows combined with loose Fed policies ignited a historic credit boom. The failure of China to move more quickly to encourage higher domestic spending contributed to the higher incomes added fuel to the fire.

Now, a bloated financial sector is being forced to contract. Some institutions, like the merchant of Bank of America and Merrill Lynch, are happier than others. But the underpinnings of Lehman Brothers, in other way, there will be downsizing. Foreign central banks are shifting capital inflows on their investment decisions. As they absorb their losses on US treasury and agency securities, capital flows to the rest of the world. This will diminish the resources available for investment in the US and push interest rates up. US households will have to start saving again.

The one anomaly is that the dollar has strengthened in recent weeks. While the US has longer external to be a supplier of high-quality financial assets, one would expect the dollar to have weakened. The dollar's strength reflects the knee-jerk reaction of investors to crashing into US investment as a safe haven. It is worth remembering that at the same thing happened in August 2007. After the Asian crisis erupted, the same investors realized the extent of US financial problems, the rush into treasuries subsided, and the dollar resumed its decline. Now, as investors recall the extent of US financial problems, the dollar resumes its decline.

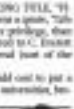
Emphasizing greed and corruption as causes of the crisis leads to a bleak prognosis. We are not going to change human nature. We cannot make investors less greedy. But an emphasis on policy distortions suggests more optimistic conclusions. Unintended consequences cannot always be prevented. Policy mistakes may not always be avoidable, but they at least can be corrected. That, however, requires first looking more closely into the root causes of the problem. Project Syndicate

Barry Eichengreen is professor of economics at the University of California, Berkeley.

Saving for college

THE UTTERLY BOORLEY 10D AN INVIGING TITLE, "I'll Invested This for Friends." On the first page was a quote, "Life affords no greater responsibility, no greater privilege, than the raising of the next generation," attributed to L. Evelyn Bing, former United States surgeon general (out of the equivalent of one fourth surveyor).

Inside were figures on how much it would cost to put a child through several local and international universities, broken down into the



PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

process, as well as projecting 5 years, 10 years and 18 years ahead. There were also tables showing how much you would need to save per month to have enough to get one child into those universities 8 years and 13 years from now.

I totally agree with the basic message of the booklet: "The earlier you come, the better." And the figures were also a great reminder of how difficult it is to send one child to college in the Philippines with its weak economy and an educational system that is pretty much left to the private markets.

Let's look quickly at the figures (it's impossible to get figures from me), since tables into a newspaper column or have with the numbers):

Multi-million

The current projected cost for a four-year degree program is listed as P1,881,000 for UP Pi-El, 624 for Ateneo de Manila, P607,334 for the University of Asia and the Pacific (UAP) and P788,139 for De La Salle University (DLSU).

Citibank offers figures for six foreign universities as well, but for the part of the New York University, the cost for a four-year degree (and note the dollar sign): $34,320 for the National University of Singapore (NUS), $52,203 for the Australian National University (ANU), and $88,093 for Oxford.

Are you feeling reminded now about the figures for the Philippines? Well, they shouldn't be. If you were a Singaporean, Australian or British national, you'd be paying much lower fees, maybe even lower than what Filipinos have to pay for a local education. The figures given are for foreign students, including Filipinos rich enough to send their kids abroad.

If you just started parenting, as I have, you're supposed to have an extravagant browser over what we were saying soon. The problem is that tuition fees will also keep increasing over the next few years. Citibank's estimates for local universities? In 18 years, a four-year education would cost (I'm rounding off the zeroes digit, multi-million figures): P2.1 million at UP Pi-El, P6.7 million at the Ateneo, P8.3 at UAP and P9.6 million at DLSU.

Still dreaming of an overseas education? Eighteen years from now, you should have $236,383 to go to NUS, $290,525 to ANU, and $489,126 to Oxford.

Citibank has computed how much you need to save per month if you want to have the tuition money 18 years from now. Build your branch now as I share these figures: P1,379 for UP, P4,616 for Ateneo, P5,716 for UAP and P6,625 for DLSU. Dreaming of Oxford? Apple now to become an expat tax if you haven't heard, the Bicolas preferred brand over "overseas Filipino workers") and make sure you set aside $511 each month for NUS, $720 for ANU and $1,216 for Oxford.

Don't whisper, as we mentioned part of the tuition inflation, for the past few years the working rate'll need for two UP universities: $2,690 for Harvard and $2,788 for Stanford. But don't get deceived by the $1/6 difference. If your child ends up in Stanford, you'll have to get a car because they have a terrible mass transit system there.

All said, it looks like a lot of bull tightening for a UP professor to have two children in college. Especially as "Ay, some Citibank computations are still for one child. All the more reason for family planning.

I checked with one of my junior faculty who has a young son. He and his wife are both assistant professors, each with a take home pay of P72,000 a month. Monthly expenses include P15,000 for rent, P10,000 for food, various (subsidized) UP housing), P5,200 for utilities, P2,500 for a helper. Preschool fees run up to P30,000 a year. Savings? What savings?

Yes, the children of UP professors are exempted from tuition at UP but many UP professors's kids have to take their parent's Ateneo by insisting on another school. You might have to consider that option if you're a UP prof. Professional friends are doing, partly in jest of course, "Sana, if you want to study in one of those other schools (my emphasis on "other"), you have to know I won't be able to afford it, and you'll have to start saving now." You can show them my column to do.

'Saving-saving'

Projections are projections. Eighteen years from now it could be better, or worse. Whatever, we need to think ahead, and work on saving, difficult as it may be.

I'm fortunate that Sandra Ui'i have the luxuries (now don't get ideas about huge paychecks, let me just say I write purely out of love for the job). Our children's school are not even second-tuitionary, but I still find myself thinking twice, thrice, before buying something. Sometimes I tell a pushy shop owner or sales clerk, "You know, if you had caught me the room ago when I still didn't have children, I'd buy this item even without your sales talk, but now it's going to be more difficult to convince me to buy."

It helps in saving when you're with you when you shop. Besides pricking your conscience, they're so unruly that you can't browse too long in a store and, inevitably, you cut your shopping trips short because they're the ones who whine about going home.

Because online are so cute (modesty aside), shop keepers always call another them, so when I do entry into my computer store without them, the dealers inadvertently keep the store from temptation by asking, "Oh, hasn't the baby?"

Besides bringing your kids to anti-splurging entry saving (smirk!), always plan your shopping. Make a list of what you need, not what you want. Summon yourself against all those gift ads. Do not go to malls on pay days. Think it out first at several stores, re-evaluate the product and re-canvass prices. Also do an Internet search for consumer reviews of the product and you'll be able to access all kinds of remarks from previous buyers, often pointing out limitations, if not defects.

Shhhhhes? There's the proverbial wheelbarrow selling everything from kerosene to insurance policies (it used to be also editorial plans). As for mutual funds and stocks, investing in them now is like trying to make money in a casino.

Don't forget the most important investment: conscientious education. Invest in prepare the kids to get into good schools, including practicing a good study habits in high school, and, later, UP Diliman, too, they'll get a scholarship to one of the better universities.

Finally, make sure they learn to save as well, and acquire a work ethic, just in case they have to be working students.

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What does gender have to do with it?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

CLIMATE CHANGE IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE BIGGEST issue confronting humanity in the 21st century. Governments from all over the world are mobilizing intelligence, information, resources, technology and political will to address the ramifications of climate change, and to find ways to mitigate its effects.

But what does gender have to do with it?

This is the question that women's groups, decision-makers in government, environment scientists and disaster relief officials from all over the world will seek to answer in what has been called "the first and biggest global congress on gender in climate change" that opened in Accra, Ghana, on Monday. Gathering from opens this Sunday, Oct. 19 at the Dusit Thani Hotel, and gathers about 150 delegates, including government officials and representatives of the United Nations and related agencies.

The congress's organizers say that "women's voices concern over the absence of women in the discourse and debate on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, both of which are global mainstream issues," and Dr. Hia Bah, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Dr. Nan Paull, Women in Politics (Cayman). "Thus, this congress will focus on climate change, identify its impacts, thoroughly review the gender aspects, study its implications for the Millennium Development Goals, explore legislative and policies as well as a global action plan with appropriate strategies to enhance environmental disaster risks," she added.

Organizers of the congress in Cayman, in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO). The gathering is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the European Commission (EC).

* * *

THERE is no denying that the impacts of climate change—whether in the Philippines or the world to many disasters of increasing ferocity, short spurs of water, acidic land and sea life, even new diseases developing and still diseases re-emerging due to shifting climate conditions—still hit women harder. One reason is that many more vulnerable consequences. The failure of US regulators to tighten capital and funding standards when abundant capital inflows combined with loose Fed policies ignited a historic credit boom. The failure of China to move more quickly to encourage higher domestic spending contributed to the higher incomes added fuel to the fire.

Now, a bloated financial sector is being forced to contract. Some institutions, like the merchant of Bank of America and Merrill Lynch, are happier than others. But the underpinnings of Lehman Brothers. In other way, there will be downsizing. Foreign central banks are shifting capital inflows on their investment decisions. As they absorb their losses on US treasury and agency securities, capital flows to the rest of the world. This will diminish the resources available for investment in the US and push interest rates up. US households will have to start saving again.

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Barry Eichengreen is professor of economics at the University of California, Berkeley.

Seeing places with a hero's eyes

LOOKING BACK

Anabeth A. Grandpo

TEN YEARS AGO, I VISITED THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (Bureau) Legal Office on Taft Avenue to seek expert opinion on an autopsy undertaken on bones excavated in Cavite that were being passed on as the remains of Andres Bonifacio, who was executed with his brother somewhere in the Mount Buntis mountain range in 1897. My research assistant Jonah and I were there to see how something that attracts public interest because of the popular "C.S.I." TV series.

Nothing came of that research because the bones disappeared before the test and have not been found since. The Bureau's lawyers were not in Batas's and they would not have authorized those sensitive 42-set bone left are photographs and an autopsy report by Dr. Jaime de los Angeles and a notarized Deposition to Death.

I didn't realize, until I set beside Dr. Bonnel Supa on a flight to Singapore, that the NBI actually has a monographic history that is as rich as the search for artic treasures. It seems the NBI is worth a forum rest because we can probably see human psychology on our knees and history. While Supa is more engaged in drug abuse rehabilitation, he fenced with interest in my research and I told him that perhaps they could help me in some historical research.

When Bonnel made his first step abroad in 1983, he spent three days in Singapore on a stopover. In his diary, he wrote on his second day in Singapore: "Until the Philippines recently one week ago today I was not familiar with it in a foreign country." Now, I will take a plane ride for two hours and you can be in a foreign land.

Reading Rizal's travel diaries in the context of modern air travel can be very engaging as we can compare and contrast travel in his time and ours. Rizal's stopover in Singapore that Bonnel recorded this night more in his diary:

"I've had a sad and frightful dream with all the appearance of reality. I dreamed that while in Singapore, my brother had died suddenly and I told my old mother, who was traveling with me in the same boat, about it. The dream was confirmed by the Canadian and then I had to endure the saying everything in that country. Why did I have that dream? I'm thinking of calling my hometown to find out the truth, but I'm not superstitious. I left my brother strong and robust. May God will that it might not happen that!"

What is even more interesting is that this was not the first time Rizal had premonitions or prophetic dreams. He continued: "It is true that I had a dream once that was fulfilled. Before the examination for the first year in medicine, I dreamed that I was asked certain questions but I didn't mind them. When the examination came, I was asked the questions in my dream."

* * *

When we are told in school that Rizal had very high grades and that he maintained an academic average at the top of his class, you should remember that he could borrow many questions before he took tests. Was he lucky or cheating? Maybe he should have asked Bonnel, who was a student of mysteries on that the universe would have been more useful. We know that he was second prize in latin while he was in exile in Dapitan, which was why he was able to buy over 30 hectares of prime beach front property there.

Perhaps I should not only look at dreams. Even in the mundane diary entries that a historian takes at face value, a forensic psychiatrist might see something else of value. When Rizal described what he saw on the second day in Singapore, was he just giving us a narrative of what he saw and experienced, or was we find deeper meanings there?

For example, he wrote: "The first that I saw were merchants/Hundreds of Chinese in European style, surrounded by wally and trees. I made the carriage stop in front of a Chinese building decorated with a variety of flowers, planted with symmetry and order, quite as the Europeans. I entered and was received by Consula with some English words. With these, I entered a kind of small garden among odorous and profuses. Numerous beautiful plants and

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Prisoner Teehankee's release is ridiculous

LETTERS

CLAUDIO TEEHANKEE JR.'S RELEASE FROM the New Bilibid Prison (Inocron, 9/27/00) is ridiculous, given the fact that he was convicted of murder, homicide and frustrated murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. At the time of his release, Teehankee had been in prison for only 14 years.

According to Supt. Ramon Nuyes of the NBP, Teehankee was granted an good conduct time allowance (GCTA) that every prisoner is entitled to for good behavior.

Under the GCTA, a prisoner may avail himself of a deduction of five days each month during the first two years of imprisonment; eight days each month in the third through the fifth year of imprisonment; 10 days each month in the sixth through the 10th year; and 15 days each month in the 11th year and onward.

After 14 years in prison, Teehankee's GCTA total is just 1,728 days or an equivalent of four years and eight months computed as follows: for the first two years—24 months times five days (deduction for every month) equals 120 days; for third through fifth year (three years)—36 months times 8 days deduction for every month equals 288 days; for the sixth through 10th year (five years)—60 months times 10 days deduction for every month equals 600 days; for the 11th year through 14th year (four years)—48 months times 15 days deduction for every month equals 720 days.

If we add 120 + 288 + 600 + 720 days, the total is 1,728 days or an equivalent of four years and eight months.

Our advice to the Board of Pardons and Parole, revise the way you compute the GCTA. To justify your action relative to risk-control to like Teehankee, make it one year deduction per month of good behavior.

—BENJAMIN E. GALLARDO,
bel_gbl@yahoo.com

MGB-8 clarifies report on GMA flare-up

THIS IS TO CLARIFY THE REPORT THAT President Macapagal Arroyo flared up when Loreto B. Alliaro, director of the Ilocos and Cordilleras Bureau (MGB) of Region 8, could not give the names of eight rich barangays in Barangay City (Inocron, 8/2/00).

As explained by Alliaro, during the ROCC emergency meeting on Sept. 30, 2000, all the towns and cities that were covered by a geohazard assessment were provided with reports immediately after the field assessment. The reports bear the list of the barangays assessed and their corresponding landslide rating, together with the recommended mitigating measures and interventions. Thus, the concerned LGU executives (mayor and barangay officials) were already aware of the hazards in their respective localities and that the ROCC emergency meeting, which it was not able to bring the copies of the geohazard reports and the list of 1,732 barangays.

On the other hand, GMA positively noted and even said "good" when Alliaro reported that MGB-8 completed the rapid geohazard assessment of the 1,179 barangays in the provinces of Leyte, Southern Leyte and Biliran, in a record time of less than two months.

We did this by pooling together the MGB regional technologists. GMA also appreciated Alliaro's explanation that the role of the MGB is to identify the geohazards and their implications, the interventions would be the responsibility of the concerned LGUs and other government agencies. GMA also acknowledged the efforts of MGB in conducting a series of seminar-workshops on geohazards, as a disaster management intervention.

—CESAR L. DALUZ,
supervising geologist,
Mines and Geosciences Bureau,
Regional Office 8,
Kaunlaran Site, San Pedro Hill, Brgy. Bagacay,
Candahug, Palo, Leyte

In that ROCC meeting held last Sept. 30, the President was more concerned with the eight villages of Barangay City (the place where an approaching tropical storm was expected to make its landfall), not on the total number of barangays identified as high risk to landslides. In his embarrassment and in the annoyance of the President, MGB-8's chief Alliaro could not name the eight villages right there and then.

—MATT A. GARETA,
correspondent, Tacloban City, Leyte

UP Baguio alarmed over alumnus' disappearance

WE, THE ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, STUdents, staff, and concerned alumni of the University of the Philippines Baguio (UPB), express our extreme alarm and distress over the disappearance of Atty. Rubes Jose Bulo, 37, while he was on his way to his family's residence in La Trinidad. Every attempt by family and concerned colleagues to reach him or track him down has failed since.

We are deeply disturbed by reports linking him to operatives of the Intelligence Services of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP). Rubes's political advocacy for Cordillera peoples' rights, his visible and decisive presence in critical fora and activities calling for social justice, Cordillera autonomy and ancestral domain, and his unwavering opposition to government repression of Cordillera peoples' organizations and initiatives during the last two decades are well-known.

Amnesty International (AI) has pointed out that Rubes's possible enforced disappearance can only be understood in the larger context and longer history of: (1) enforced disappearances, extrajudicial executions, and political killings, and systematic repression of dissenters or perceived subversives that have characterized governments and military policy in the Philippines since the Marcos regime and have picked up in intensity, impunity and scope after Gloria Macapagal Arroyo came to power; and (2) a government that openly declares (Sec Hor Diplos Ruslay Lapsia) effort under Arroyo's all-out counter-insurgency program that has categorized progressive organizations and leaders, NGO or civil society activists, critical journalists and citizens as "leftist" or "left-leaning." Rubes after all is listed by Amnesty Laya as a senior member of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in the Ilocos and Cordillera regions.

We are proud of Rubes's accomplishments as an alumnus of UPB, particularly his decision to use his academic training and many talents in the service of the Cordillera region and the interest of Cordillera peoples. His selfless and more socially responsible commitment to the requirements of regional development and social well-being is a true reflection of UPB's institutional vision and activities of making its academic work and public service programs eminently responsive and sensitive to Cordillera concerns and contexts.

We therefore appeal, strongly:

To the authorities concerned, to release or surface Rubes immediately;

To the government and its relevant agencies, to enact every effort in investigating his case so as to make accountable those responsible for his disappearance and, more importantly, to trace his whereabouts if state security forces are responsible;

And to all alumni of UPB and concerned citizens of the country to raise their voices against human rights violations and state-sponsored violence such as this.

To do nothing about this is to foster a culture of impunity, let loose a violent regime that oppresses its people and invite the dreaded martial rule to once more rear its ugly head in another guise.

Further, James Rubes now!

—FRIENDS & COLLEAGUES OF JAMES BULO,
University of the Philippines Baguio

Politicized nun part of Lozada sting—Morato

I REFER TO THE LETTER OF SR. MARY JOHN Mananzan, OSB, entitled "Glenda Priory Statement in Fort Africa (Inocron, 9/26/00) Sister Mary John challenges and criticizes the Court of Appeals' decision denying Rodolfo Lozada's petition for the writ of amparo. She claims to have been "enraged" and "frustrated by the utterances of it" and "had my misgivings."

Sister Mary John's knowledge of the Lozada incident is limited to what Lozada and his wife had told her. I ask: How accurate is the story she got for her to question the decision of the justices of the Court of Appeals? Even the lowly poor souls from the remote areas of the islands know that the whole thing was a sting, as a matter of fact, Lozada was treated well and protected from those in the opposition who wished to silence him.

Sister Mary John claims that our courts are "politicized and are therefore incapable of rendering justice to our people." And how about Sister Mary John? Isn't she one of the most politicized persons in this country which is something so ugly for a nun to be?

Allow me to be honest and frank. It's people like Sister Mary John who have caused more trouble in this country and added to much more to the destabilization of our nation.

I have one suggestion to make: Why doesn't Sister Mary John, national co-chair Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines no less, stay in Tacloban for good and better or, dare, she to a cubbie corner, a shame to the faithful after her years of the Christian values as taught us by Christ.

The amount of deception that Sister Mary John and her cohorts, together with the Lozada clan, have spewed on our young unknowing students all over the country is enough to debunk this pseudo nun who is no doubt fulfilled after her years of the Christian values as taught us by Christ.

Sister, Lozada was not kidnapped. You all made it up!

—MANUEL "MANOLITO" MORATO,
director,
Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office

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Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Sargento

De Oro traders revolt vs BIR exec

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—MINDANAO'S INDUSTRIAL hub is gearing for a business shutdown in the coming days as hundreds of angry businessmen join protests against the regional office of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

A memorandum circular on tax collection, issued by bureau regional director Mustapha Guiabdoma, triggered the protests.

The strike plans' business owners under a 15-day curtailment by the BIR on source-value-added tax (VAT) declarations even while an audit for income tax is ongoing. It also removes any guidelines in computing annual income tax to be based on average daily sales.

Chinese businessmen, who for decades secretly adhered to tax measures imposed on them by the government, are coming out against what they describe as "oppressive measures" being implemented by Guiabdoma. They said the BIR assessments and billings were being moved with out reasonable and fair bases.

Should the business holiday push through, hundreds of establishments here will close shop, a move that could bring millions of pesos revenues to the economy.

Northern Mindanao is considered the island's industrial hub as it hosts large multinational corporations, such as Del Monte and Nestle, and is home to vast economic zones, such as the Phividec estate.

The region has posted the third highest revenue tax collection for the past two years, a fact that the businessmen asserted as proof that they are good taxpayers.

The planned protest comes after **two local taipans march side by side** with small mall owners to air **calls for the lifting of the BIR order** and the resignation of Guiabdoma.

"We are now pissed to the wall and we are given no other option but to fight back," said Rodolfo Mefios, president of the Oro Chamber of Commerce and Industry and spokesperson of the newly formed coalition of businessmen in Northern Mindanao.

Mefios said the businessmen felt oppressed by Guiabdoma's style of collecting taxes. "He (Guiabdoma) is squeezing the businessmen dry. Hundreds of businessmen were forced to close down because of his unreasonable measures," he said.

President businessmen, among them the owners of Limketkai Center and Gaisano Malls, are members of The Oro Chamber, the Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Cagayan de Oro Chamber of Industries.

The businessmen said Guiabdoma issued the erratic orders (MOs) out of whim and that the assessments and billings that he hands out do not have their bases.

Several small entrepreneurs, who asked not to be named for fear of reprisal, have complained that tax collectors sent by Guiabdoma constantly harass them, a grocery owner said he had been harassed by Guiabdoma's men to pay P30 million in taxes for 2007.

Guiabdoma has remained unavailable for comment as of this writing. Ms. Emilia Rodriguez and Cerico C. Albacin, Inquirer Mindanao

THE LAST time businesses in Cagayan de Oro City went out the streets was for the Kagay-an Festival to celebrate the city's booming economy, becoming sponsors for floats such as this oversized fan.
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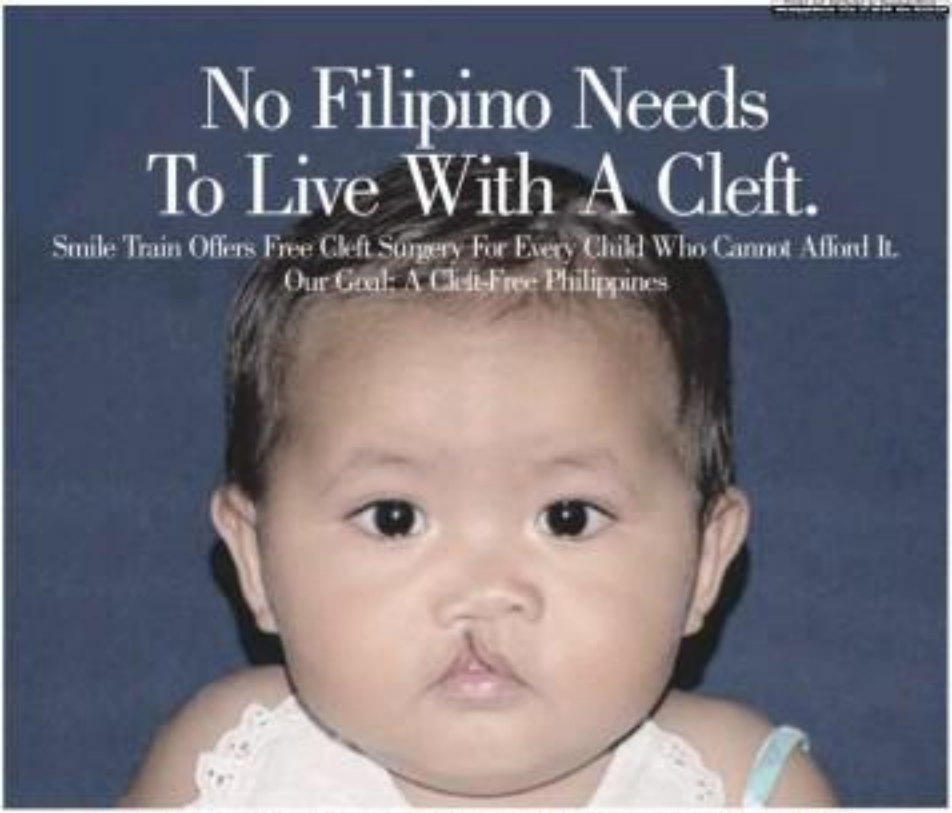

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₱232M earmarked for Jolo airport

JOLO, SULU—THE Philippine and US governments poured in ₱232 million to widen and improve this capital town's airport to accommodate bigger aircraft.

Carlos Tan, program director of the Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) or Infrastructure Identification and Counterpart Management, said the construction firm OS Santiago Construction had started its onsite survey and ground civil works two weeks ago.

"We hope to complete the upgrading and improvement within a period of 10 months," Tan said.

A M&M carrier fires as he salutes the Secretary Market in Jolo town. Trade in the town is expected to get a boost after improvements in the town's base airport are completed.

The existing runway is 18 meters wide. It will be expanded to 30 meters. Its length will be stretched from 1,500 meters to 1,800 meters.

Upgrading will also cover the rehabilitation of the runway making it durable for heavy aircraft. "The design of the upgrading and improvement is intended to accommodate bigger aircraft such as Boeing 737s," said Tan.

Currently, he said, the airport could not accommodate bigger aircraft because its runway was too narrow. It can only handle the 50-seater types like the ones used by Asian Spirit, Inaan and military cargo planes.

Usman Ange, officer-in-charge of the airport, said the airfield once belonged to the US military. "It used to be a US airfield covering about 1,000 meters of runway. The Americans used this place in the height of the war against the Japanese," he said.

The airfield was turned over to the local government after the war. In 1965, then President Ferdinand Marcos ordered the paving and upgrading of the runway when he visited the province. The runway was extended by another 200 meters.

Ulamon again ordered a 500-meter extension, Ange said.

The total of the P232-million funding for the airport's upgrading, P142 million will come from the GEM-IMED while P90 million from the Department of Transportation and Communication (DOTC).

"The GEM-IMED funding will concentrate on runway upgrading," Tan said.

The DOTC will focus on the relocation and resettlement of some settlers, as well as the construction of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) wing. —Jolly S. Bijuda, *Inquirer Mindanao*

Crime survey reaches Baguio

BAGUIO CITY—The National Police Commission launched on Monday the Baguio leg of a survey that aimed to identify areas rife in the province as well as the reasons crimes go unreported.

Imelda Gabriel, the Napoleon Cordillera employee overseeing the Baguio survey, said Napoleon Carreon, senior Miguel Coneta had proposed the study to help government refine its policy on crime reportage and statistical coordination.

According to a Napoleon briefing document, law enforcers will analyze fragmented reports of underlying crime data.

Police also need to address the fact that many crimes go underreported because people do not file complaints, the document said.

Reporting crime to the police is a personal decision, which is weighed against a victim's level of trust in the police. —*Wayne Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Expanding political arenas for tribes

By Maurice Malanes
Bagnio City

TIMES HAVE CHANGED A LOT since the 1970s when celebrating what was then called "Tribal Filipino Month" was mainly another form of protest against a dictatorship that killed and made martyrs of the likes of Kalinga chieftain Macli-ing Dulag.

Under the late President Ferdinand Marcos' iron-fist rule, the Church and other religious organizations had instituted "Tribal Filipino Sunday" every second Sunday of October. Special Masses or ecumenical worship services were held to honor tribal Filipinos. Celebrants paid tribute to them and extolled them for their wisdom in preserving and managing their lands and resources.

Tribal Filipinos, for instance, had been lauded for hunting, gathering and mining (or panning) from the forests only what they needed. Such appreciation of what the tribes saw made in contrast to what their leaders and activists considered the rapacious greed behind large-scale logging, mining and other extractive industries.

In the Cordillera, the celebrants lamented and spoke strongly against the "militarization" of tribal communities, which had protested against these industries, along with the Marcos regime's "development projects" such as the proposed series of World Bank-funded dams along the Chico River in Mt. Province and Kalinga.

Marcos' soldiers killed Dulag on April 24, 1980, but not the philosophy on land stewardship he acted-and the protests against the dams he helped lead. Among other things, he had said nobody could appropriate for himself the land because "only the land owns the land."

"How can you own what nurtures you?" Dulag once said.

KNOWLEDGE women of Mankayan, Benguet, take part in a ritual dance during a "salme" (feast) in the town.

Indigenous culture

In every tribal Filipino celebration, participants would not only pay homage in metaphor like Dulag but would also celebrate whatever aspects of indigenous culture that had survived colonization. These included a strong sense of community cooperation, restorative (as opposed to punitive) justice and holistic spirituality (as opposed to the dualistic religious-world view that colonizers introduced).

The celebration was, in a way, driving across an important message: Even before almost 400 years of western culture under the Spaniards and more than 50 years of American influence, a flourishing culture existed in the archipelago.

In Marcos' time, the event was limited to tribal leaders, activists, church leaders and other advocates. As a form of protest against the regime, it was usually held to churches, school gymnasiums or auditoriums or to public parks after a street march—which revealed the constricted space or arena for indigenous voices.

During the Marcos regime, the political arenas for indigenous peoples were the streets, and, in some extreme cases, the hills

THE CORDILLERA's indigenous groups display their culture and heritage in tourist-drawing attractions like the Panagbenga or the Baguio Flower Festival.

Changing political arena

The political arenas have changed, particularly after a new Constitution was put in place in 1987. After the lobby efforts of tribal Filipino leaders and representatives themselves, the Constitution has finally recognized the rights of "indigenous cultural communities," including the rights to their ancestral lands and domains and to govern themselves according to their customary laws and practices.

These constitutional rights ushered in an enabling law—the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (Ipra) of 1997. For the Ibaloi Nation, the Philippines is often cited as a model of some sort because of the Ipra.

The act created a separate bureaucracy, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, which has employed mostly indigenous professionals.

During the Marcos regime, the political arenas for indigenous peoples were the streets, and, in some extreme cases, the hills.

Despite what some indigenous peoples' leaders consider its flaws, the Ipra has helped provide a venue for indigenous peoples to engage the government. For example, indigenous communities can use Ipra's free and prior informed consent (FPIC) process to evaluating and assessing and finally accepting or rejecting a development project, such as a mine or a dam.

Critics, however, cite some instances in which the FPIC process had been subverted. Their common issue was that only a few elders or town government leaders were involved. Some indigenous leaders had alleged that cases of bribery and corruption had tainted it.

Still, the FPIC process, if continued with indigenous peoples' own vigilance, offers an arena where they can get a better bargain or register their sentiments.

Global arenas

Many of the issues of indigenous peoples, such as those related to land and resources, still persist. But the political arenas through which they could scrutinize these issues have expanded even to the global front.

At the UN, indigenous peoples lobbied and strengthened their own ranks and networks and pushed for the creation of an arena through which they could be heard.

One of these arenas is the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which has been chaired since 2006 by Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, a Kankanaey from Bauko, Mt. Province. An activist since the First Quarter Storm, Tauli-Corpuz had immersed herself in the local indigenous peoples' movement before working with the UN.

Other arenas, which needed more indigenous voices, include the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

One of the good news for indigenous peoples is the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which the UN General Assembly approved on Sept. 13, 2007.

Along with the Ipra, the declaration, says Tauli-Corpuz, can also be invoked by indigenous peoples in asserting their rights to their traditional knowledge, culture, land and resources, and their right to determine how best to govern themselves.

But unless it is put to good use, the declaration is just another document. That challenge, says indigenous peoples' advocate and lawyer Ifyalin Peris, is how to apply this by continually invoking it so it becomes a living document.

Stocks soar on multitrillion-dollar bailouts

From page A1

In early trading on Tuesday, London's FTSE 100 index of leading shares rose 4.7 percent, while Germany's DAX climbed 4.2 percent. The CAC-40 in France was also up 4.6 percent.

The gains on Europe's markets came in the wake of the strongest **ever daily performance** on Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index, which surged 14.15 percent. Tokyo financial markets were playing catch-up to recent developments because they were closed Monday for a holiday.

Southeast Asian markets also rallied strongly with the Philippine stocks leading gains in the region with a 7.2-percent surge. (See story in Business, Page B6.)

Wall Street on Monday closed 11 percent higher. Its biggest daily jump since 1933. US stock markets are expected to again open solidly on Tuesday.

Bernanke explains plan

In an article in the Wall Street Journal, Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke said that the government plan to buy equity in banks constituted a broad attempt to end the crisis, which began with the collapse of the US housing market bubble and sent major financial institutions and jobs worldwide.

"These steps will allow us to restore more normal market functioning and encourage private capital to further support the reinvigoration of financial markets," Bernanke wrote.

Joanne and Ian Di Bruno say they weren't too rattled as Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Citigroup, JPMorgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and Bank of New York Mellon Corp. According to Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, Jr., the bailout plan is expected to help stabilize the system.

The programs, which will be financed by the $700-billion bailout package passed by Congress, is expected to save other US banks in a later stage.

$2.7-trillion rescue

Similar moves in Europe helped restore some confidence among investors on Monday. "Day The Market Breathed Again" was the headline in Britain's Guardian newspaper above a photograph of the London city skyline, bright in a golden sunlight.

It takes a long time for US market to recover

NEW YORK—IT TAKES WELL Wall Street considerable time to recover from crashes and for investors to regain their confidence and decide it is safe to put their money into stocks again.

Here's a look at how the US stocks market recovered from its two main journey crashes, and how much it needs to recover from its latest plunge.

• When the market crashed on Oct. 19, 1987 and sent the Dow Jones industrial average down 508 points to 1,738.74, the Standard & Poor's 500 fell 101 points, or 36.1 percent, short resulting a then record loss of 1,722.42 on Aug. 25, 1987.

It took just over 13 months for the Dow to get back to its pre-crash levels, and almost two years to the day—Aug. 24, 2989—to reach a new closing high of 2,734.64.

• The recovery from the 1929 crash was more difficult—and spanned a quarter century. The Dow had reached a high of 381.17 on Sept. 1 and then began declining downward. Although the date of Oct. 29, 1929, Black Tuesday, is probably best-known by the public, many market historians say the real "crash" began on Thursday, Oct. 24, and terminated the following Monday and Tuesday.

From its close of 305.85 on Oct. 23, the Dow tumbled 75.78, or 24.8 percent, by the time it ended at 230.07 on Black Thursday. It continued its decline to a low of 198.69 on Nov. 13, giving the blue-chip index a drop of 182.16, or 47.8 percent.

That also made for a dropped 182.48, or 47.9 percent, from the September high. But stocks kept on falling as the Great Depression wore on, and the Dow fell to 41.22 on July 8, 1932, giving it a loss of 339.95, or 89.2, percent from the September 1929 high.

The Dow did not get above above 305.85 again until April 1, 1936, more than 241 years after the crash, and it didn't return to 381.17 until Nov. 23, 1936, a quarter century after Black Monday and Tuesday.

• The Dow has a large percentage drop to regain this time. By Friday's close, the average had fallen 3,723 points, or 40.3 percent, from its record finish of 14,165.43 on Oct. 9, 2007. After recently the index fell 3,978, or 28 percent, from its close before the Sept. 15 collapse of Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc.—the event that triggered the frantic sell in the global credit markets and sent stocks tumbling.

With Monday's advance of 936.42, the Dow is "still only 4,776, or 19.7 percent, below its record close. AP

Asian stocks up

Taking more steps to fortify their own financial systems, Asian governments helped most markets across the region to rally.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index ended up 5.3 percent, while South Korea's market jumped more 6 percent. Singapore closed 2.5 percent higher, erasing half of last week's losses so far this week.

Only China's market fell, sinking 2.7 percent.

Indonesia's market, which was shut half of last week due to dramatic declines, was up more than 6.4 percent. Thai stocks jumped 3.5 percent on double-digit gains to banks.

Vietnam also snapped seven straight sessions of losses to recover 4.8 percent, while Malaysia, which outperformed the region last week, rose 3.6 percent.

"Investors are peeping out of their bomb shelters," said Sean Callow, currency strategist at Westpac.

Some analysts, however, were skeptical of the stock rally in the past two trading sessions and warned the sharp rises may well prove to be a chaotic, short-lived bear trap.

Southeast Asian markets are still down between 33 and 56 percent so far this year, with Malaysia and Vietnam being the best and worst performers, respectively.

Threat of recession

Despite the upsurge in stock markets, the threat of global recession remains.

A downgraded forecast from the Bank of France, which predicted growth would drop to minus 0.5 percent in the third quarter, showed the country was losing its economic momentum after a 0.3 percent contraction in the previous three months.

A group of leading economic think tanks in Germany also said that Europe's biggest economy was likely to grow only at around 0.2 percent in 2009. "To the extent of 2008, the German economy is on the brink of a recession," the six institutes wrote in their latest economic outlook.

There were more downbeat data. In London, figures from the continent's other major economy showed Britain's inflation rate accelerated to the highest point of 5.2 percent in September.

Former US Federal Reserve Chair Paul Volcker said the United States—the world's biggest economy—was already in recession while a slowing of Chinese money supply growth suggested a big drop in the increasingly important country.

Trouble lurks in smaller economies too.

Officials from Iceland, driven close to collapse in frozen credit markets caused by banks to fail, are to discover for talks on an emergency loan that could be worth billions of euros.

Ukraine will ask the International Monetary Fund for a funding program, according to a senior IMF official. *Reports from AP, Reuters and AFP*

RP an island of calm

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on second economic leering.

"Yes, the Philippines is lucky because they have made the necessary adjustments and reforms when times were still good," Bernard said.

"So they are facing the global market problems and economic slowdown from a far more enabling improved position, compared to what they were in 3-4 years ago…"

Bernard added: "The Philippines is an 'island of calm' currently, while there is normal to higher need and previously visible constraints…"

The Fitches released the e-mail at a time when many countries in the Western world, including economic powers like the United States and Britain, were struggling to cope with an international financial crisis.

Media explains

Based on some statistics, however, the Philippine economic picture is not all that rosy.

Official statistics show the Philippine growth rate for the second quarter slowed down to 4.8 percent, a notable 40-year dive in the 8.2-percent expansion registered in the same period last year and below the growth forecast of 5.2 percent.

The value of the peso has also depreciated from 41.23 to 47.240 on the dollar since the start of the year.

The country's inflation rate also rose to a 17-year high of 12.3 percent in August before easing to 11.9 percent in September, while the value of the local stock market has declined by around 40 percent since January.

Sought for comment, Rolando Tungpalan, deputy director general of the National Economic Development Authority (Neda), said the lessons there were clear lines for Standard & Poor's assessment of the Philippines.

Tungpalan said the inflation rate not only had slackened in September but that the August rate was primarily a reaction to "movements in the oil and cereals markets."

Reforms in place

Tungpalan said the rating agency was apparently seeing the fiscal reforms put in place by the government, including adjustments in the banking system made as a result of the Asian financial crisis in 1997.

"I don't want to put words in to the Fitches' mouth," Tungpalan said, but we can relate with their assessment, "he said.

In a brief message, Finance Secretary Jesus Duterte thanked the country's "fiscal reforms, tulling national government debt from P1.937 billion in 2004 to P32 billion currently, public sector surpluses, and falling debt to gross domestic product ratios."

Bernard's message was included to soften the's presentation at the Cabinet's economic cluster meeting presenting updates on the market for government action plan to cushion the negative impact of the financial crisis on the country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo on Monday proposed a fourth-one billion initiative to protect the region from the financial crisis that has taken toll in the country on the sidelines of the Asia-Europe Meeting in Beijing next week.

Duterte said Ms Arroyo would announce today preliminary details of the regional strategy.

"The country will be very careful not to a panic reaction. "It will weather the storm if there is any storm at all."

Incentives bill

At the same briefing, Tungpalan assured the public of the government's "full progress" to reform the investment incentives system.

The main idea was to exercise increasing spending on infrastructure and basic services, a top priority in the P1.4-trillion national budget for next year, and better tax collection.

"We are keeping this momentum and [we] should keep account only in calm but also better success," Tungpalan said.

At the House of Representatives, Majority Leader Arthur Defensor said House Bill No. 5245, which calls for the adoption of an investment code in the country, would be among the top measures to be considered by the chamber.

Speaker Prospero Nograles said the proposed measure would set up an updated and coherent investment policy that would make the country attractive to foreign and local investors.

Nograles said the Philippines needed to compete with other developing economies in the region in love foreign investors, especially since local capital was limited.

The proposed measure seeks to reconcile the Omnibus Investments Code, the special laws for economic zones and other incentive measures.

One of its authors, Rep. Raoul Javier, said these measures have "made the situation confusing and unmanageable to both the government and investors."

With a report from Lelio B. Schaerrle

JDV urged to back son, ink impeach complaint

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cannot endorse the complaint," said the one-witness in the Senate probe of the $329-million contract with China's ZTE Corp. for the National Broadband Network (NBN) project.

At least one-third of the 240-member House of Representatives must endorse the impeachment complaint so that it can be sent to the Senate for trial. The opposition controls only 29 seats in the House.

Not consulted

Whether the elder De Venecia has lost his power base since being toppled from power in February, apparently a reflection of Malacañang's disgust over his son's support on the NBN-ZTE Deal, is not clear.

The new impeachment complaint, the fourth in as many years, accuses the President of betrayal of public trust, culpable violation of the Constitution, bribery, graft and corruption and other high crimes.

President in high spirits

His lawyers was in "high spirits" when she justified over a Cabinet meeting yesterday, apparently unfazed by a fresh impeachment complaint against her.

"She is OK," Press Secretary Jesus Dureza told reporters after a press briefing. "The Cabinet members were even joking around."

Ms Arroyo presided over three meetings yesterday, including the National Security Council, the National Economic and Development Authority and the National Anti-Poverty Commission in Malacañang.

"I don't know if you can say is that way," Dureza said when asked if the President was unfazed by the complaint.

"But she's is in her normal self presiding over the Cabinet meeting, with so many subject matters."

Undersecretary Secretary Jim Interacted Ms Arroyo was in a good mood because there was a good prognosis on the economy.

The impeachment complaint wasn't mentioned during the Cabinet meeting, according to Dureza.

Question of numbers

Former Senate President Franklin Drilon predicted that the fresh complaint would be junked by the administration-dominated House.

"It's a total political maneuver that draws public attention to the offensive that the administration has committed against the people. I suppose it," Drilon said in separate interview.

"But it would succeed because the administration controls both the House of Representatives. That's the political reality. Yes, nothing will happen about it. It will be dismissed. It's a question of numbers."

Senate President Pro Tempore Jinggoy Estrada predicted even before the complaint was filed on Monday that the impeachment complaint would get less support in the House than the three previous complaints against his mentor.

The latest—filed on grounds of unfeasibility the impeachment complaints filed in 2005, 2006 and 2007.

North Rail project

A lawmaker said the elder De Venecia was removing some of the impeachment complaints because of his role in the NorthRail project, one of the items included in the charges against the President.

"All I know is that he (his father) never wanted his (Speakership Initiative) will prove that we are really out for the truth," said the younger De Venecia. The project is aimed at reviving rail service to Northern Luzon.

The complaint said entering into the NorthRail project without the requisite approval of the Monetary Board and without giving preference to Filipino labor and investment amounted to a culpable violation of the Constitution.

Cabinet Hary Roque, who is also one of the signatories, said that civil society groups called Arise accuse the policies behind the elder De Venecia's reluctance to sign the complaints.

"We filed because under the law, a crime must be reported," Roque said.

In Lanao, Lagura, Vice President Noli de Castro on Monday expressed displeasure at the complaint, saying it was distracting to address the global economic crisis affecting the nation.

'Divisive, unpatriotic'

In a resolution, officers and members of the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP) pointed out that the complaint divisive and an unpatriotic act of political grandstanding.

The resolution was approved yesterday at the third national board meeting of governors at the Century Park Hotel in Manila.

It said the impeachment complaint "creates more questions for ordinary Filipinos than it provides answers to their current problems spawned by the likely global recession."

"The impeachment suit will put under an domestic problems," said LPP president Leo Oompen, Misamis Occidental governor.

Oompen said the complaint resurrected old issues that had already been resolved.

In the resolution, the LPP said: "The political instability and division that these impeachment proposals hope to spur with their reckless political gimmick will only weaken the country's economic momentum and dampen investor confidence in the domestic economy."

The LPP accused De Venecia, Roque and Drilon of using the move to a springboard for their political ambitions in 2010.

"The country's governors are standing firm against political attacks by the Arroyo administration to help save the negative impact of the division and counterproductive impeachment drive," the resolution said.

Cash and pork

Staples said the impeachment complaint was primarily being clamored by members of the House as it would usher in the "cash and pork" barrels for them and make their "tokenism" again to the eyes of Malacañang.

"Was a P500,000 per representative the last time? I think that will not be enough this time around given the dollar and cost of goods have all gone up since last year," said Staples who was a congressman for three straight terms since 1998.

Aside from the rush that would guarantee that the President won't allow any way head and facilitate the trial on the impeachment complaints of Noli Public last year, the pork barrel of pro-Malacañang lawmakers (PTA millions in Priority Development Assistance Fund) would be increased expeditiously to say nothing to Staples.

Staples said his comments were based on his experience.

Reyno Abuso Rep. Isaac Dumpit, who endorsed the complaint, said that House members seeking reelection or higher posts in 2010, 2013 before judging the complaint.

"If there charges against the President involve public savings and the congressmen just brush them off, they would be marked as pro-administration candidates in 2010," said Dumpit who believed that the impeachment complaint had a "slim chance" of getting approved. *With reports from Jeannette I. Andrade and Rosalie Pinlac, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Noli says gov't ready for return of jobless OFWs

By Cynthia D. Balana

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO yesterday assured the public that the government was ready for the homecoming of some 30,000 to 300,000 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who could be displaced by the financial turmoil in the United States and other parts of the world.

De Castro, presidential adviser on OFWs, said in an interview that "everything is being done to cushion the impact of the possible influx of said OFWs back to the country."

He said that officials of the Department of Labor and Employment and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) had met to map out and implement contingency measures to address the needs of these OFWs.

The meeting, he said, was meant to offer displaced OFWs with alternative sources of livelihood in substitute for the jobs that they lost abroad.

De Castro said that Middle East economies where the majority of OFWs work were not seriously affected by the crisis.

Based on a labor department report, there were already more than 30,000 possibly displaced OFWs in the US agricultural and services industries, according to De Castro.

"We cannot just neglect our duty to help our modern-day heroes after they lost their jobs abroad," he said. "We have to find them alternative means of livelihood even on temporary basis or at least while there is a global economic crisis."

De Castro said that the global financial crisis, if not properly addressed, might affect jobs abroad.

He said the government was exploring and opening new job opportunities in other stable markets such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Russia.

De Castro said job-matching was in place in which returnees' skills would be compared with the available jobs in the domestic market.

Another measure, he said, was the retraining of workers, through Tesda.

For OFWs with savings, De Castro urged them to take advantage of the Retirelagyan Law he sponsored while he was a senator. Under the law, an OFW can buy $1,000 worth of livelihood tools tax-free.

"We strongly urge those with savings to start even a small business in their source of livelihood while they are out of work. This would also be good even to those who are currently employed for this could be additional income for them," De Castro said.

'No cutback ...

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demand for Filipino workers in the face of the global recession remains.

"So the situation remains stable and we do not expect any reduction in the demand for overseas Filipinos especially in the Middle East," he said in a press briefing.

The Building and Wood Workers' International had warned that the number of jobs in the build, his construction industry in the United States could decline by as much as 1 million, increasing the number of underemployed Filipinos there.

It said it had monitored some overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who had flown back to Manila after losing their jobs, adding that their "families will have a sad Christmas."

Over the years, overseas Filipino workers have managed to keep the economy afloat, sending home some $14.4 billion last year, nearly a tenth of the gross domestic product.

Bosque said it was inaccurate to assume that the OFWs coming home were laid off as a result of the global economic downturn.

"This is the normal trend after their contracts have been terminated," he said.

Jobs in Canada, Australia, Europe

Contrary to fears of a contracting job market abroad, there are many jobs awaiting Filipinos in Canada, Australia and European countries, Bosque said.

"We have signed up with four provinces in Canada," he said. "The pay rates are relatively higher compared with what the Filipinos are enjoying in other countries."

Another DOLE team is leaving for Australia to start negotiations on the possible employment of Filipinos there, Bosque said.

"When the option comes for Filipinos to go overseas, and generate a job offer from Australia, we have ample protection mechanisms that are already in place," he said.

Both Canada and Australia are offering jobs for nurses, IT personnel, teachers and hotel workers, among others, Bosque said.

Worst-case scenario

"We are also looking at Taiwan, Norway and New Zealand as new markets that would be needing the services of Filipinos," he said.

Bosque said that the DOLE had drawn up a contingency plan for overseas workers in case the United States slides into a recession.

"We have assessed the worst-case scenario, and we are prepared for it. We have the mechanisms to counter any workers and we will provide them with the necessary assistance," he said, but declined to go into specific details.

Hurricane Ike

In some parts of the United States, the aftermath of massive search is confronting the impact of the global financial crisis on Filipino overseas workers.

Some labor groups are fearing the economic slump would hurt the construction business in the United States, which employs many Filipino workers.

But 50-year-old Jerry, a private contractor in Texas, said the construction business is booming now in states recently pummeled by Hurricane "Ike."

"The business is booming now because of the damage brought by 'Ike.' Many homes and buildings have to be repaired," Jerry told the Inquirer by phone.

Hurricane Ike hit Texas and nearby states in early September, shutting down oil production in the area as well as damaging residential areas.

But Jerry acknowledged that a few of his friends from other states, like New Jersey and California, had already lost their jobs.

He also said that prices of basic commodities had gone up.

International labor groups with Filipino members said the other day that the financial slump was also threatening the jobs of more than eight million Filipinos overseas.

They said those in the service sector, like construction workers and nurses, are the most vulnerable. If they lose jobs, they are likely to stay as undocumented migrants instead of coming home, since no work awaits them in the Philippines, said the Building and Wood Workers' International.

Overseas Filipino workers are also likely to reduce the amount of their remittances this holiday season, the group also said.

Filipinos in the United States are not giving up hope, however. "There are many jobs here than the Americans do not want to take. So we are optimistic we can survive the crisis," Jerry said.

Second or third jobs

Aside from the looming threat of losing their jobs, Filipino domestic helpers will have to learn to cope with cuts in their salaries due to the global financial crisis.

Consuelo Brogan Ingalado, chair of Migrante International, said Filipino maids would have to cope with the crisis by taking on other jobs, borrowing money or participating in the underground economies in their respective countries.

"To ensure that they can send money home, they will have to find ways to cope. One maid will have to look for a second or even a third job or sell goods in the underground economy," Ingalado said.

SC rules Moro land deal unconstitutional

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with respect to any further peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

"The further process by which the MOA-AD was designed and crafted runs contrary to and is inconsistent with the legal authority and mandate ex to substantial, repetitive, oppressive, unbridled and unsuperable exercise," the Supreme Court said in the decision written by Justice Candelaria Carpio Morales.

The high court's earlier temporary restraining order on the signing of the agreement in Kuala Lumpur is widely seen to have relegated the attacks by rogue MILF commanders on civilians in certain parts of Mindanao. (See What Went Before on this page.)

The attacks as well as the resulting skirmishes between government and MILF troops have displaced tens of thousands of families, who continue to remain crowd squalid evacuee camps. The civilian death toll has reached almost 100.

Abuse of discretion

The high court chided the presidential adviser on the peace process for committing "grave abuse of discretion when he failed to carry out the pertinent constitutional process" in connection with the provisions of the agreement.

"The MOA-AD cannot be reconciled with the present Constitution and laws. Not only in specific provisions but the very concept underlying [the] ... relationship between the [government] and the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity," the high court said, adding:

"[For] the concept presupposes that the associated entity is a state and implies that the same is on its way to independence."

The high court also said the provisions in the agreement for establishing an association relationship between the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity and the government "virtually guarantee that the necessary amendments to the Constitution and laws will eventually be put in place."

"Besides the [government] peace panel nor the President herself is authorized to make such a guarantee," the high court said.

"Upholding such an act would amount to authorizing a usurpation of the constituent powers vested only in Congress, a constitutional convention or the people themselves through the initiative process, for the only way that the executive can ensure the outcome of the amendment process is through an undue influence or interference with that process," it added.

The high court also dismissed the plea of the respondents (Executive and the government peace panel) to dismiss the petition on grounds that President Macapagal-Arroyo had said the government would no longer sign the agreement in whatever form.

It pointed out that the controversy involving the document may be repeated: "[The] presence of terms in the draft MOA-AD that are exactly the same as or similar to provisions of the Constitution and laws is evidence of the grave violations of the Constitution inherent; the exceptional character of the situation and paramount public interest; the need to formulate controlling principles to guide the bench, the bar and the public; and the fact that the case is capable of repetition yet evading review."

How they voted

Those who concurred with the decision were Chief Justice Renato Corona and Justices Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, Antonio Carpio, Adolfo Azcuna and Ruben Reyes. (who all issued separate opinions) and Justice Andres Reyes Jr. (who issued a concurring and dissenting opinion).

Justices Dante Tinga, Minita Chico-Nazario, Presbitero Velasco, Antonio Eduardo Nachura, Teresita Leonardo-De Castro and Arturo Brion were dissenting opinions. Justice Renato Cayetano joined Tinga's dissent.

In his concurring opinion, the Chief Justice said peace negotiations should not violate "the paramount powers vested in the Constitution."

"We want to dream of war, not symbols of shackles and balances must be infringed. Worse are in times where the only danger that faces the state is the lesser danger of rebellion," Puno said.

Affirming authenticity

In voting to dismiss the petitions on the ground of mootness presented by the government, Tinga said: "The successful outcome of negotiations of international agreements is the ultimate goal and consummation of the agreement."

"The initialing of the agreement reflects only the affirmation by the negotiating agents that the text of the prospective agreement is authentic," he added, countering the MILF position that the government was bound by the agreement because its negotiators had already "initialed" the document.

Tinga, however, recognized the unconstitutionality of the agreement, saying it gave powers to the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity that were "reserved either to the Constitution to the state."

"Nothing prevents Congress from amending or reenacting an Organic Act providing for an autonomous region for Muslim Mindanao," Tinga said.

Nevertheless, the panel members required to amend that any Organic Act providing for autonomy in Mindanao must be in line with the Constitution," he said.

WHAT WENT BEFORE

ON JULY 16, REPRESENTATIVES of the government and the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) announced that they had reached an agreement to expand a Bangsamoro homeland in Mindanao.

Under the proposed memorandum of agreement on ancestral domain, the planned homeland will include the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Basilan, Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu) and Marawi City; six municipalities in Lanao del Norte; hundreds of barangays in the provinces of Sultan Kudarat, Lanao del Norte and North Cotabato, which voted in 2001 to become part of the ARMM; and parts of Palawan.

It will have its own "basic law," police and internal security force, and system of banking and finance, civil service, education and legislative and electoral institutions, as well as full autonomy to develop and dispose of minerals and other natural resources.

The two parties expressed optimism over what was described as the long-sought solution to the contentious issue of "ancestral domain" from ancient Muslim lands that the separatists claimed were lost during the Spanish colonial period (and, eventually, the dreadnought, an end-off Moro armed struggle in Mindanao.

The MILF demanded for government recognition of the Bangsamoro ancestral domain had been a major stumbling block in the formal peace negotiations since the signing of the ceasefire peace agreement on June 22, 2003.

The agreement was scheduled to be signed on Aug. 5 in Kuala Lumpur. (The Malaysian government had been brokering the talks that led to the formulation of the agreement.)

But certain local officials, lawmakers and groups took the matter to the Supreme Court, saying the proposed Bangsamoro homeland could lead to the formation of an independent state.

On Aug. 4, acting on the petition filed by, among others, local officials in Zamboanga City and North Cotabato, the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on the signing of the agreement.

On Aug. 7, clashes broke out in Mindanao, with MILF forces occupying areas in North Cotabato and displacing thousands of civilians. The fighting escalated as Moro troops raided towns in Lanao del Norte and Sarangani.

MILF leaders blamed the attacks on field commanders impatient at the delay in the implementation of the agreement.

In oral arguments heard by the high court, Justice Antonio Carpio said "several" provisions in the agreement clashed with the Constitution. He said implementing these provisions would require amendments to the charter.

The tribunal also pointed out that the Philippines could be brought before the international courts if it failed to honor the agreement, once signed, and that the country could be forced to amend the Constitution regardless of whether Congress or the people agreed.

On Sept. 2, after issuing cease-firing statements on the government's stand on the MILF and the agreement, Malacañang announced that it was dissolving the government peace panel and that the administration would not sign the document "in light of recent violent incidents committed by [rogue] rebel groups."

The MILF was formed in 1978 by Hashim Salamat, who refused to honor a peace accord that Nur Misuari's Moro National Liberation Front forged with the government in 1996. (Dona Pazzibugan, Inquirer Research)

MILF to take case to United Nations, Islamic states

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once that the Mindanao peace problem is a national agenda."

"The problem is Mindanao is taken hostage by disagreements within the government," he said, adding that another way of resolving the conflict is the booth was for the government to offer a negotiated political settlement.

'Lots of options'

Hermogenes Esperon, President Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser on the peace process, said the Supreme Court decision declaring the MOA-AD illegal could mean an escalation of war but could also lead to finding more ways to peace.

Esperon said the government was not yet giving up on peace. "There are lots of options, but it's not just my decision."

He said he had to discuss the matter with other members of the Cabinet, after which "we will submit our recommendation to Malacañang."

At the Palace, Press Secretary Ilana Donesa also had an appeal to all concerned sectors to "look upon ... the high court's verdict with sobering concern for national interest and adherence to the exigency as well as righteousness of peace in southern Philippines ..."

"We warn against any attempt to take undue and illegal advantage of such developments that would lead to the deterioration of the situation on the ground and pull the nation further from the objectives of peace."

Donesa refused to acknowledge that the high court's decision had validated the claim of critics that the government was wrong in agreeing to an extended Bangsamoro homeland.

He said Malacañang was leaving it to Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera to take the "appropriate steps" vis-à-vis the high court's decision.

"Let's wait for the actions that will be taken by our lawyers," he said in response to a briefing. "We have already taken the position that whatever the [opinion] of the Supreme Court, we will not be signing the MOA-AD."

Storm reminder

North Cotabato Vice Gov. Emmanuel Pinol, who was among those who asked the Supreme Court to stop the signing of the MOA-AD, said he and his colleagues were correct in opposing the agreement.

"What started as a parochial struggle to protect the territorial integrity of the province of North Cotabato and to uphold the constitutional rights of the people to know what the government is doing on their behalf has become part of our national history," he said.

Pinol said the Supreme Court's decision was "also a stern reminder to our officials in government that their lofty positions that carry mesmerizing titles do not give them the absolute power to decide what is best for the people."

He said that if there would be fresh talks for a new agreement with the MILF, "public officials should always go back to the people for consultations."

MILF political affairs chief Ghadzali Jaafar said the group was not closing the door to a possible resumption of talks.

But Jaafar admitted that it would be "hard to reorganize" with the high court's ruling on the agreement, and said he still did not know its effect "on the ground."

Warriors also said the MILF could not return to the negotiating table just yet.

"The MILF has seen the results of the government's abandonment of the peace process," he said.

He also said that in the event that the government and the MILF talked peace again and signed agreements, "there has to be a guarantee ... from the international community" because "we cannot trust the government administration will implement those agreements."

Military ready

Army chief Lt. Gen. Victor Ibrado said military troops in Mindanao were ready to respond to any eventuality as they step up their campaign against renegade MILF forces in the wake of the high court's ruling.

"Our troops are ready for any eventuality. That's a possibility, but we are always hoping for the best and preparing for the worst," Ibrado said yesterday on the sidelines of the military and police forces' friendly games at Camp Aguinaldo.

"In case there is a need [to engage in force], we are ready to move. But at this time, we don't see the need to do that," he said.

Ibrado said it was unlikely that the base commands of pursued MILF leaders Ameril Umbra Kato, Abdullah Macapaar alias Commander Bravo and Aleem Sulaiman Pangalian would regroup and mount massive attacks.

"These have only been small disturbance, not all-out attacks. As of now, we don't see the attacks developing to that level, maybe because the rebels are also having a difficult re-encounter. Their old battlefields are now under military control," he said.

But Amirah Ali Lidasan, secretary general of the Bantu Bangsamoro, said the government should welcome the resumption of the peace process and not "practice its wet opinion."

"It will help settle a series of grievances, like human rights violations and injustice, will be addressed ... The government must recognize and respect the rights of the people," Lidasan said.

Mary Ann Arnado of the Mindanao Peoples Caucus said the situation in certain parts of the South would be unstable if the government and the MILF failed to find a solution.

Arnado, a lawyer, said peace advocates were also "trying to find ways to move the situation forward."

Abuse of power

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago said the MOA-AD, the Supreme Court "just its foot down on politics and arrogance."

"This is the beginning of real peace in Mindanao based on truth and justice. Let the people of Mindanao and the entire nation celebrate this historic triumph of justice over the reckless abuse of power," Bunye, who was among the interveners to the petition lodged by Mindanao officials against the MOA-AD, said in a press conference.

"This decision teaches the lesson that irresponsible executive leadership cannot prevail indefinitely in the presence of a vigilant judiciary," Bunye said.

"This is a big setback for Mindanao[n]s, who believed that our people and study, but recklessly pursued an unconscious MOA-AD. But we're happy that sanity is restored in our country," he said.

Another intervener, former Senate President Franklin Drilon, said the high court's ruling "reaffirms our faith in the wisdom of the people in the independence of the Supreme Court, particularly the Chief Justice and the seven justices who concurred with it."

But more important, Drilon said, the ruling served as a caution on the administration.

"The Supreme Court did the country a favor by saving constitutional boundaries for the MOA-AD. This should serve as a lesson learned against the reckless constitutional adventurism that the President has displayed in the past," Drilon said on the phone.

Legitimate concern

Speaking with reporters, House Deputy Minority Leader and Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said the high court's ruling "only affirms that the executive, which supervised the [government] panel, did not study well the constitutional implications" of the document.

But Ocampo also said the government should not set aside the issue of ancestral domain in future talks with the MILF because this remained a legitimate concern of the Bangsamoro people.

Asked if he thought the ruling would lead to more hostilities, he said the MILF leadership would have to be watched.

He also expressed the hope that the ruling would not prompt an "all-out war" declaration. Reports from Alec Alconaba, Julie Alipala, Edwin Bacasmas, Jeoffrey Maitem, Neil Alcober, Charlie Sedano and Jeffrey Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao; Christine Avendaño, Jerry Esplanada, Leila B. Salaverria, Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio in Manila

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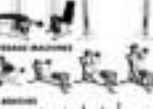

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JOLO AIRPORT UPGRADE

US Ambassador Kristie Kenney, Joloo town Mayor Hussin Amin and Sulu Gov. Abdusakur Tan each put earth to taking ceremony to upgrade the old Joloo airport. (Story on Page A-19.)

JOEY A. GARCIA, PHILIPPINE PHOTO NEWS

NEWS

Bill favors libel respondents

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES will tackle next month a bill requiring libel complainants to file their cases in the locality where the print or broadcast entity that supposedly maligned them is located.

Cebu Rep. Tomas del Mar said the committee on justice has approved one for three deliberation House Bill 4101 which would prevent complainants from filing libel cases to distort cases in favorable jurisdictions.

Del Mar said the bill he filed provides that the criminal or civil action for libel against a community journalist, publication or broadcast station shall be filed in the regional trial court in the province or city where the principal office of the respondent is located.

The measure also provides that any civil action shall be filed in the same court as the criminal action.

Del Mar said the bill should help media entities cope with the expense and time spent dealing with libel complaints in far-flung places.

Under personal rules, an offended party may file a complaint anywhere the publication or broadcast is read or heard, regardless of where the offending entity is based.

The bill is one of several pending in both the House and Senate aimed at decriminalizing libel.

41 more China dairy products melamine-free

By Dona Pazzibugan

HEALTH AUTHORITIES HAVE CLEARED 41 more China-made dairy products of melamine contamination.

All 41 products, including chocolates and cookie products, came out negative for melamine in the fourth round of tests conducted by Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD).

So far, only three out of 113 locally available milk and milk-products tested, were found to contain melamine, an industrial chemical known to damage the kidneys.

The tainted products were identified as Yili Fresh Milk, Mengniu Drink, and Jolly Cow Slender High Calcium Low Fat Milk.

BFAD also released its latest findings to investigators late yesterday.

"It shows the Philippines is not that affected by melamine[contamination]," Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said when reached by telephone.

"We hope it will only become better," he also said.

He said BFAD would continue to run tests on other dairy products.

Last week, BFAD officials said they would also validate the results of the private Double Tsering Grocer in Quezon City which found traces of melamine in rice milk candies, a chocolate brand, a milk powder for pregnant women, a repackaged coffee creamer used in restaurants, a luncheon meat brand and a corned beef brand.

Melamine-contaminated milk has killed at least four babies and sickened at least 54,000 others in China in the worst tainted food scandal to hit China.

The scandal has prompted a worldwide recall of dairy products from China.

Cleared List

The 41 products cleared of melamine were: Anchor Fresh Milk, Calcilonly Flavorin (Milk Flavor), Candyman Kendi Sim Chocolate Filled Cream, Cambarian M-Ro Caramel Sarwee Chocolate Filled Cream, Dairy Champ Evaporated,

DongGuan Baiteng Chocolate Cream Wafers, DongGuan Panjiang Xiao Fu Popcorn Cookie, DongGuan Baiteng Apple Biscuits, DongGuan Golden Puddyfield Candrop Biscuits, DongGuan Golden Puddyfield Little Biscuits, DongGuan Muyang Gaung Steg Food,

Dagrian Layer Biscuits, Dagrian Layer Biscuits, F&N Blue Cow Condensada, F&N Daisy Condensada, Sembrouse Skimmed Milk Powder, Sin B Thin Milky Soya Drink, Fudlolac Biscuits, Koko Candy, Kyrus Candies, Liu Wei Bang Lollipop Candy,

M&M's Mini Chocolate Candies, Mai Wei Su Cookies, Milky Soya Milk Drink (Chocolate), Milky Soya Milk Drink (Green Apple), Milky Soya Milk Drink (Melon), Milky Soya Milk Drink (Sweet Corn), Penghan Thin Cracker, Pelaka Soy 4-U Soy Bean Drink,

Prime Root Calcium Enriched Nutritious Cereal, Prime Root Chocolate Nutritious Cereal, Sally Shang Milk Candy, Sally Shang Coffee Candy, Salamin Little Bear Biscuits (Chocolate flavor), Sunrise Coffee Candy, Tong Fien Soya Milk (unsweetened),

Yilaiyi Cold Plat Healthy Soya Drink (Low Sugar Or Calcium Low Fat Cholesterol Free), Yu's Drink, Zhen Shi Xiaobaobi Biscuits, Dongshun Low Sea Food Jelly (Pudding), and Dongshun Melissa Butter with Filling Cake.

Cleared for sale

Duque said supermarket owners could resume selling those milk and milk-related products cleared by BFAD.

"They can put these products back on their shelves, but traders must make sure these products are registered [with BFAD]," he said.

The melamine-tainted Greenfood Yili Fresh Milk and Mengniu Drink were not registered with BFAD, which indicated they were smuggled into the country.

The other tainted product, Jolly Cow Slender High Calcium Low Fat Milk had a registered distributor, Fly Ace Corporation.

But BFAD officials could not say whether the product itself, Jolly Cow Slender was registered.

Duque earlier said BFAD could test other China-made food products after it has completed its tests on dairy products.

BFAD director Leticia Gutierrez could not be reached for comment yesterday. Her staff said she was attending an Asean health ministers' conference in Nusa Dua.

Aplus METRO
Editor Babe G. Dipasupil

'Down with billboard'

DPWH hits owners of unsafe outdoor ads

By Alcuin Papa, Michael Lim Ubac and Nancy C. Carvajal

PERSEVERE. of the Department of Public Works and Highways removes a billboard that fell on top of a bus traveling on the southbound lane of Edsa on Monday afternoon. MICHAEL VARCAS

THE OWNER OF ONE THREE BILLBOARDS ON EDSA THAT COLlapsed on Monday afternoon, leaving five people hurt, was ordered by the Department of Public Works and Highways in May to dismantle the huge outdoor ad for being unsafe.

Reynaldo Tagalicudin of the DPWH Quezon City engineering district said engineers yesterday that they had already issued a notice on May 16 this year to Universal Outdoor Inc. to tear down the billboard.

"But they asked us for a clearance," he said, adding that the onset of the rainy season also prevented the department from continuing its operation to tear down illegal and unsafe billboards in Metro Manila.

According to Tagalicudin, the company possessed a certification dated Aug. 28 from a structural engineer identified as Josefina de los Reyes who allegedly said the billboard was sound.

Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane said they would investigate De los Reyes and the owners of the billboards that toppled over.

"Who is Josefina de los Reyes? We have to call her and the building official to bring along their documents to prove the integrity of the structure," Ebdane said. "We will launch an investigation to determine the culpability, if any, of these persons."

He added that the criminal and civil liabilities of the billboard owners would depend on whether these injured would press charges or settle out of court.

"On the part of the department, we will pursue administrative remedies. We will subject those responsible to an investigation and blacklist the structure owner so that they will not be able to erect such structures again. We will also revoke their clearances with the department," Ebdane said.

He pointed out that many billboard owners were using legal tactics to prevent his men from dismantling their outdoor ads.

"They would ask us for an extension. When that lapses, they would file a TRO [temporary restraining order]. When that lapses, they would file an injunction," Ebdane said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the Department of Public Works and Highways to inspect all billboards in Metro Manila in 2006 after a huge ironbar ad toppled over in Guadalupe, Makati City and killed a man.

The DPWH was also directed to tear down billboards that posed imminent danger or threat to life, health, safety and public property.

"It looks like Mother Nature is already upset and is helping us in dismantling the billboards. But we hope there will be no casualties. Let's pray for that," Ebdane said.

In a related development, Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago yesterday renewed her call for the criminal prosecution of billboard owners.

"Jail to billboard owners," said Santiago, the principal sponsor of the Anti-Billboard

SOURCE: A27

PUVs, cabs soon banned from yellow lanes

By Marlon Ramos

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA DEVELOPment Authority (MMDA) may soon prohibit taxicabs and public utility vehicles like city passenger vans and jeepneys from using the yellow lane on Edsa, the agency said.

The yellow lane refers to the easternmost portion of the 23-kilometer thoroughfare for the exclusive use of some 3,000 passenger buses plying Metro Manila.

Under the MMDA's yellow lane policy on Edsa, two lanes are for the exclusive use of passenger buses plying Metro Manila while a single lane is set aside for provincial buses. These lanes are clearly marked with a yellow line that serves as a divider between the yellow lane and the remaining lanes reserved for private vehicles.

In a statement, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said that since the yellow lane runs already clogged with buses, it was only logical to ban other PUVs from using the lane.

He said the ban was also in preparation for the full implementation of the Improved Organized Bus Route (OBR) system that

PUVs, A24

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NO TIME FOR A LEISURELY STROLL
A man walks on the shore of Manila Bay, looking for recyclable materials which can be sold to junk shops.

Cuerpo suspension lifted

By DJ Yap

MALACAÑANG HAS REVERSED the decision of the Bataan provincial board suspending Bonifacio Mayor Pedro Cuerpo from office, the town mayor said yesterday.

In an Oct. 3 order signed by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, the Office of the President set aside the suspension imposed by the antagonizing Pandaonfajos of Rizal on Cuerpo and exonerated him of the charges.

"I feel vindicated. What I've been doing, for my town, as Malacañang itself said, is all in good faith," Cuerpo said in a phone interview.

"That the fight is not over yet," he added, saying he still had to face other administrative and criminal cases filed by his political opponents, including a sedition case pending at a San Mateo Circuit court, which he described as "preclusive."

Cuerpo said he got a copy of the order only on Monday night. Although he said he was relieved the Palace reversed the suspension, the mayor said he appealed sworn from Rizal officials to have him out of office.

The Rizal provincial board and Cuerpo had been at odds over the proceeds of tipping charges and other fees paid by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority for the use of the 19-hectare landfill.

In March, the provincial board suspended Cuerpo when he insisted on collecting the tipping fees even though the court hearing the dispute had not yet ruled in favor of either Rizal or Bonifacio town.

This prompted Cuerpo and his supporters to barricade themselves inside the municipal hall for several days to protest the suspension order, leading Malacañang to order a stay of his suspension. The provincial board then questioned this stay order at the Court of Appeals, which ordered Malacañang to resolve the provincial board's appeal.

Vice Mayor Jocose Cruz, who acted as mayor during Cuerpo's suspension, later filed sedition charges against Cuerpo and his backers for "breach of peace."

Last Friday, a San Mateo court issued an arrest warrant for Cuerpo and five town officials, for which they posted a bond of P9,000 each.

Of the total 8,000 metric tons of trash produced by Metro Manila a day, 3,000-4,000 are brought to the Rodriguez landfill. The rest are sent to landfills in Trece, Bulacan, Laguna and Manila.

Cuerpo said he was justified in imposing what he called "development extraction fees" for the use of the facility.

"It's garbage that Metro Manila is bringing to our town. How can there be any advantage to that?" he told the Inquirer.

Accused in antidummy suit leave RP after posting bond

By DJ Yap

TWO EXECUTIVES OF A SUE-posted dummy firm of the Lehman American investment bank Lehman Brothers were allowed by a Muntinlupa City court to leave the country after they posted a travel bond.

Edilberto Cariaboda and Ana Maria Katigbak, incorporators of Philippine Investment One Inc., were permitted by Judge Edwin Sorongon of Muntinlupa Regional Trial Court Branch 274 to fly to Sydney, Australia, for an engagement.

In separate orders dated Oct. 14, the court allowed Cariaboda to go to Sydney from Oct. 23 to 26, while Katigbak was permitted to stay there until Oct. 30.

Sorongon issued the orders after the two posted a cash bond of P60,000 each before the court on top of the P40,000 regular bail they had previously paid for their provisional liberty, court staff told the Inquirer.

The two were among five PI-SI incorporators who were ordered arrested by Sorongon on the strength of a complaint for violation of the Anti-Dummy Law filed by businessman Victor Villarosa, president of the Triple V Group of companies.

Villarosa alleged that PI-SI was actually owned by Lehman Brothers and that Cariaboda, Katigbak, Norman Marasigan, Carlos Mabulac and Michael Ballesteros were only dummies.

PISI bought a piece of property belonging to Villarosa's on Shaw Boulevard in Muntinlupa City from what was then Equitable-PCI Bank under the Special Purpose Vehicle Law.

Villarosa's said Equitable-PCI Bank accepted the property from Villarosa's as part of his P400-million obligation with the bank, under a stipulation that he could repurchase it within 10 years. The bank is a respondent in a separate civil case.

Villarosa's said he wants to buy back his property for P60 million, the same price it fetched in 2005.

PUVs, cabs . . .

From page A1

would employ radio frequency identification technology.

The GPS system, he said, would not allow the MMDA to implement an orderly way of dispatching passenger buses based on the number of passengers on the road. In addition, it would also clear idea of "volume" and cost of line hours.

"Buses who have no permanent routes. They are free to use the other lanes of Edsa. Allowing them to still use the yellow lane will be like exacerbate the right traffic situation now prevailing there," Fernando added.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Sergel de Dios said they have started informing taxi and jeepney drivers of the move to ban them from using the yellow lane.

"Disallowing taxicabs and other PUVs from entering the yellow lane will ensure an uninterrupted flow of buses on the outer lanes of Edsa," Sergel de Dios said.

He added that they would soon install signs and warning devices to inform drivers of the ban. Those caught violating the ban will be fined P300.

Sergel de Dios, likewise, reminded motorists not to cross to the portions of Edsa with solid yellow and white markings.

Violators of the "no entering rule" would be fined between P500 and P2,000.

"The MMDA means business in enforcing the 'no entering' and 'no crossing' traffic regulations because of many road accidents arising from this form of reckless driving," he said.

DID YOU KNOW

IF ONE MILLION tourists who went to Metro Manila last year, 10 percent (nearly 100,000) were from Korea, 12 percent (about 120,000) were from Japan, and six percent (about 60,000) were from the United States.

Carl L. Bonabaon, Inquirer Research

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BLUE CROSS

'Employer' turned out to be a thief

By DJ Yap

A HOUSEMAID IN PASAY CITY was robbed here during her employer's cash and jewelry canvassing to P500,000 in a raffle she thought was her boss.

The theft was discovered in the early evening of Oct. 11 when Roland Adec Manuzon, 28, and Christine Gil Sarmiento, 28, owner-lessee via their unit in Skyway Twin Towers Condominium on H. Javier Street, Barangay Pandan to find their valuables missing.

The couple told police on Monday that they failed to find a bag containing P19,150 and some red pieces of jewelry worth about half a million pesos which they kept in a cabinet.

Their maid, Vincia Tendes, 20, had told them that a woman had called her and told her to bring cash to the Manila Doctors Clinic, the Emmanuel unit is accessible to the public.

The caller was recorded like her female boss recording in Tondo, reportedly told the harassed that they let a child beggar in a car accident and needed the money to pay for hospital expenses.

The maid then searched the house for a bag containing valuables and brought it to the hospital where a young woman took it, the report said.

Meanwhile, an employee at a company selling health products lost her laptop, cellular phone, credit card and other valuables to thieves after the latter broke in her car parked at the basement of Robinsons Place-Ermita mall in Manukayong City.

Rich Domingo, 26, product manager at Corbridge Group-Philippines, told the police she discovered the theft at 7:30 p.m. on Monday.

She said she left her belongings in her car at the basement parking area, and went inside the mall to eat at a restaurant.

When she returned, she discovered that thieves had broken into her car by destroying one of the back windows.

Domingo said her Sec laptop, Lin Clubhouse bag, identification card, driver's license, Citibank credit card, ATM card, Samsung U378 cell phone, 14-K white gold necklace, watch and an organizer.

'Down with billboard'

From page A16

Right Bill, in a statement.

The bill was passed by the Senate in the 13th Congress but was ignored by the House of Representatives.

Sen Jaga has refiled the measure under Senate Bill No. 1429 in the present 14th Congress.

A committee report on the bill is expected to be reported out on the floor when senators resume from a month-long break in November.

"This recent manmade calamity could have been avoided if the House had passed my bill. But there was a compulsory to let it die a natural death," Santiago said.

Laws

Under current laws, any person involved in the construction and use of illegal billboards can be sent to jail and ordered to pay damages to victims who suffered injuries.

Sen Jaga's proposed measure calls for a fine of three to 10 times the value of a billboard company, including the signed structure, plus a jail term of one to five years.

In a separate statement, Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr. accused the Department of Public Works and Highways of being "caught sleeping on the job after three billboards on Edsa fell months apart, injuring five people and again, snarling traffic."

Regular basis

"The inspection and monitoring of billboards should be done on a regular basis, not after an accident," he said.

Two groups of outdoor advertisers yesterday said they were pushing for the speedy passage of the billboard safety law.

"We are working closely with the DPWH and the Billboard Safety Initiative to ensure all rules and regulations regarding billboard safety are enforced across the entire industry," Frank Abarca, Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines chairs said.

One of the billboards the collapsed fell on the St. Jude Thaddeus Institute on the southbound lane of Edsa, near the Ayala Triangle. A bus official said they lost at least P1.8 million because of the incident.

"The damage to the personal property is compared to nearly an loan P10 million, including the disruption of terminal operations," said Rudresh Argandoña, St. Jude Travel operations manager.

Jeannette Andrade

MetroBriefs

Truck causes heavy traffic

AN ACCIDENT involving a 10-wheel truck caused traffic on the southbound southbound lanes of the South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) before dawn yesterday. A heavy downpour and ongoing repairs on the highway further worsened traffic flow on the thoroughfare.

"The accident happened early morning. They should have made an announcement in radio or TV. They should have put a warning sign," one of the drivers caught in the traffic jam said. Philippine National Construction Corp. supervisor Emmanuel Roque said a truck was traveling on the southbound lane of the highway when one of its tires got stuck in a muddy portion of the rain-drenched highway near Bihan Bridge around 6:25 a.m. Because of its weight, Roque said they had difficulty hauling the truck that was carrying an undetermined volume of industrial oil in them impounding site in Sta. Rosa City. Nobody was hurt in the accident. As of 5 p.m. yesterday traffic remained heavy on the key exway, hours after the truck was towed away.

Alexis Romero

Cops looking for 2 robbers

MANILA policemen have launched a hunt for two motorcycle-riding robbers who took nearly P1 million in cash and valuables from a businessman in Intramuros on Monday, Jimmy Ang, owner of the Universal Service gasoline station on Andalucia Street in Sta. Cruz, said in his complaint that he was almost P900,000 in cash and checks and several cell phones worth P48,000 to the robbers at the gas station. As said he and his driver had just boarded his vehicle to deposit the cash and checks that were inside a black shoulder bag when two men on a motorcycle approached them. The robbers pointed a gun at Ang and told him to give them the black shoulder bag when he did. The two men then fled on board their motorcycle. The victims said they were not able to take down the motorcycle's plate number.

Jeannette Andrade

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY
(Public Estates Authority)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Reclamation Authority (PRA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites qualified to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following/under procurements for the BIR Relocation Renovation Project:

NAME OF PROJECT : SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF SPECIALTY WORKS FOR BIR VALENZUELA BUILDING (GOODS 30.0M to 50.0M)

Lots Nos.	Project Name	Project ID/ Nos.	ABC	Cost of Bid Documents	Delivery Period
1	Acoustic Board	08-041	Php 1,800,000	Php 1,800.00	30 c.d.
2	Air-conditioning System	08-041	8,000,000.00	8,000.00	30 c.d.
3	Doors and Windows	08-041	887,000.00	800.00	21 c.d.
4	Gypsum Board	08-041	400,000.00	500.00	21 c.d.

Brief Description of Project: Renovation of 4th to 6th Floors of the BIR Building
Location: BIR Building, No. 140 EDSA, Bo. Catmon, Kalookan City
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC): As indicated in the above Table

Prospective bidders may bid for any of the four (4) lots or all and should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the ABC. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of bids shall use nondiscretionary "pass/fail" criteria. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form stipulated in the Bid Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated shall be conducted.

Prospective bidders may visit the office of the BAC at the address below to secure the complete Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and Bid Documents, which include Terms of Reference, Technical Specifications, Schedule of Requirements, Bid Forms, Conditions of Contract, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities for Lots 1 to 4 is/are as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	October 15 - 31, 2008
2. Pre-bid Conference	October 20, 2008 (2:00PM)
3. Opening of Bids	November 6, 2008 (1:30PM)
4. Bid Evaluation	November 7 - 10, 2008
5. Post-qualification	November 10, 2008 (1:30 PM)
6. Notice of Award	November 17, 2008

Bid Documents will be available only to eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount specified for each lot in the PRA Charter.

The PRA assumes no responsibility whatsoever, to consequential or indirectly liabilities for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid. The PRA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) MYRNA B. A. ALVIAR
BAC Chairperson

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Manila, Philippines

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following project:

Name of Project/Brief Description	Supply, delivery, installation and configuration of cabinet mounted double workstation unit/PC specifications, as follows: Lot 1 - Five (5) units Workstation Type A (Inactive Units) Workstation with 2 units PC and 1 server monitor Lot 2 - Four (4) units Stand-Alone Workstation Units Workstation with 1 unit monitor and 1 printer unit 1 unit 2-server monitor
Approved Budget for the Contract	Lot 1 - P 600,000.00 Lot 2 - 1,067,000.00
Completion Period	Lot 1 - Within forty (30) calendar days after receipt of a copy of the approved contract Lot 2 - Within sixty (60) calendar days after receipt of a copy of the approved contract

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar requirement awarded and completed from 7/2005 to present according to at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of the lot or lots. If bidding for both, the prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar requirement awarded and completed under the said period according to at least 50% of the sum of the higher ABC. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Bid documents relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is/are, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 15 October 2008 (from 8:00 A.M. to 05:00 P.M. only)
2. Pre-bid Conference	21 October 2008, 2:00 PM
3. Opening of Bids	28 October 2008, 2:00 PM
4. Bid Evaluation	4 November 2008 - 2:00 PM
5. Post-qualification	Three shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR) of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.
6. Notice of Award	

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P5,000 or 0.25% of the ABC, whichever is higher.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, or to waive the bidding or failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

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Scores hurt in anti-Kosovo protest rally

PRO-SERB Montenegrin attack police in downtown Podgorica during the anti-Kosovo rally on Monday. >>

PODGORICA—MORE THAN 20 people were injured on Monday when Montenegro's police used tear gas against demonstrators protesting the government's decision to recognize Kosovo, a move seen by many as a stab in the back for Serbia.

Around 30,000 people from across the country protested in the capital Podgorica in the early evening, flowing Serbian flags and shouting "Kosovo is the heart of Serbia," they demanded the immediate reversal of the decision.

After several speeches, a Reuters reporter saw some young men throwing flaming bottles at police officers. Some threw rocks at the parliament, breaking a few windows.

Some 22 people including 10 policemen have been injured according to the sources in Podgorica medical center.

"Police detained 35 individuals for their involvement in the violent protests," a statement issued late Monday said.

It added that the protest opposition parties scheduled to hold on Thursday will be banned.

Montenegro, a former Yugoslav republic of some 650,000 people, voted to end its 3-year union with Serbia in 2006 and has since enjoyed strong growth, especially from tourism. But many Montenegrins consider themselves Serbs and say the country should support Serbia in its opposition to the secession of Kosovo, which declared independence in February.

"We demand the government revoke its decision on the recognition of Kosovo. We also demand a nationwide referendum to be called on the issue," said Slobija Lalosevic, a member of the opposition, pro-Serbian Socialist People's Party.

The government will be given until Oct. 16 to meet these demands, he added.

Some demonstrators held the flags of Greece and Spain—two of the five European Union member countries that have not recognized Kosovo.

Montenegro recognized Kosovo last week but pro-Serb opposition parties said this did not reflect popular feeling, citing opinion polls showing that as many as 80 percent of Montenegrins opposed it. Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

China jails 8 Tibetan monks

BEIJING—Eight Buddhist monks convicted of bombing a government building in Tibet during an anti-government uprising in March have been sentenced to prison, two of them for life, a judge said on Tuesday. The monks were sentenced at the People's Court in Shannan, a Tibetan prefecture, after being convicted of setting off a bomb at the building in Gyantse township, said Sang Weilai, the judge who presided over the case. Gyantse is about 1,370 kilometers east of Lhasa, Tibet's capital, where peaceful protests against Chinese rule exploded into violence in March. Ignoring Chinese and Kalsang Tsering were sentenced to life in prison while the others received sentences of between five and 10 years, Sang said in a telephone interview. He said the monks did not appeal their sentences. "We were first going to charge them with the crime of separating the nation, but eventually the charge was changed to the crime of causing an explosion," Sang said, declining to explain the decision. Using referred all questions to the Supreme Court, the country's highest court. Telephones were not answered at the court Tuesday afternoon. AFP

48 killed in road accidents

NEW DELHI—Government officials said that 48 people had been killed in a series of road accidents in north and northeastern India. Government spokesperson Amit Chandola of the northern state of Uttarakhand said 29 people were killed on Tuesday when the bus they were traveling in fell into a deep gorge. He said another five were killed when the jeep they were traveling in rolled down a mountain. Local police chief Parthasarathi Mahanta also said that an overloaded, speeding bus crashed into a stationary truck in the Dhubri district of India's northeastern Assam state. That accident killed 23 people and injured 44 others. AFP

Warning against hacking

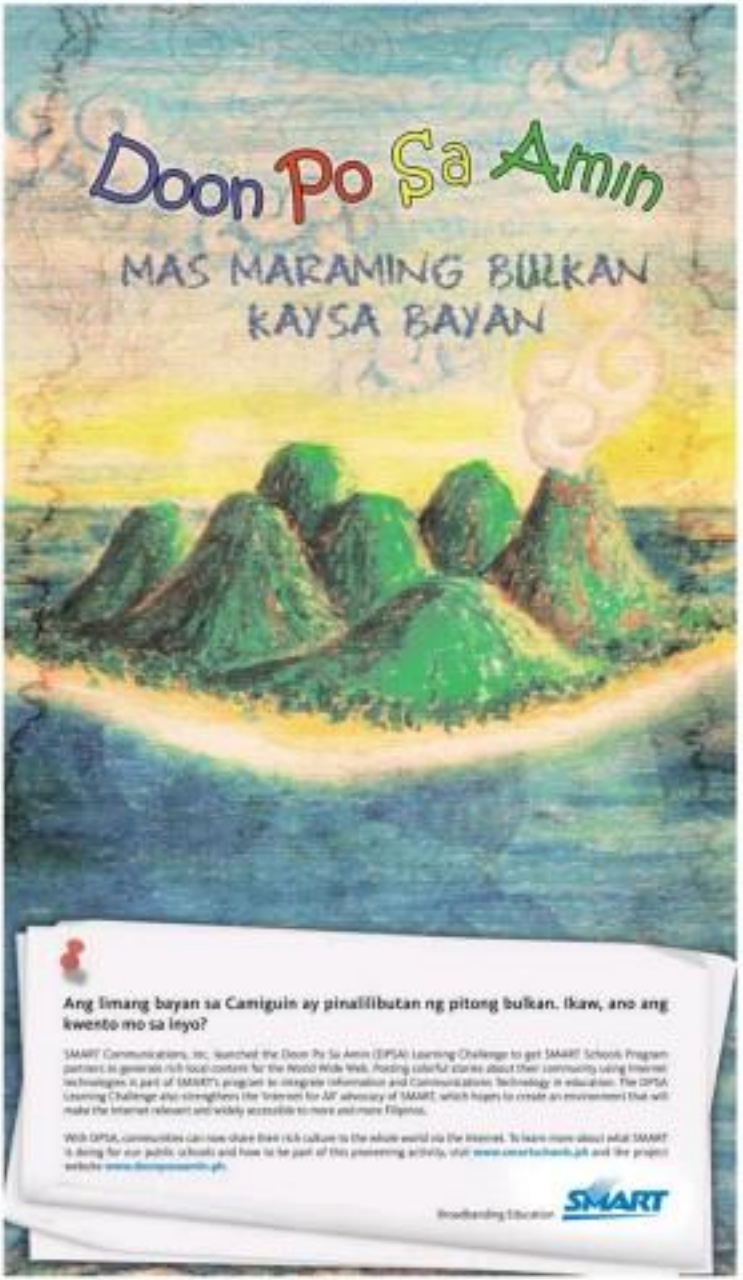
SEOUL—South Korean Prime Minister Han Seung-Soo on Tuesday warned his cabinet over attempts by Chinese and North Korean computer hackers to obtain state secrets, officials said. The National Intelligence Service (NIS), Seoul's main spy agency, said it had noted that about 130,000 items of government information had been hacked over the past four years. "According to an NIS report, the leakage of national secrets by hacking which originates in North Korea and China is very serious," Han told a cabinet meeting in remarks confirmed by his office. He blamed "(loosening) sense of security among public servants" who carelessly use data on personal computers or on the Internet. AFP

Melamine in Indon biscuits?

JAKARTA—Vietnam has complained to Indonesia of possible melamine contamination in Indonesian-made biscuits, a report said Tuesday. Vietnamese authorities informed Indonesia's embassy in Hanoi that Indonesian-made Khong Guan biscuits could be tainted with the chemical, Trade Ministry Director Sutjahyo was quoted as saying by the Antara news agency. Indonesia's food and drug monitoring agency has been ordered to probe the issue, Sutjahyo said. "Based on the results of our own tests the product is not contaminated with melamine," food and drug agency chief Hendrik Rahmat Thamrin Alafi was quoted as saying. "The products are safe because we import milk from Europe, Australia and New Zealand," Alafi said. AFP

Computer fault is the culprit

CAIRNS, Australia—A computer fault switched off a Qantas jet's autopilot and generated false data, causing the plane to plunge dramatically to near-jet liner, Australian investigators said on Tuesday. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) said the incorrect information from the faulty computer triggered a series of alarms and then prompted the Airbus A330's flight control computers to put the jet into a 650-foot (1.97 meter) nosedive. Aboard 51 passengers and crew were hurt, many suffering broken bones and spinal injuries, when the plane carrying 313 people from Singapore to Perth climbed suddenly before plunging downwards on Oct. 7. The plane was cruising at 37,000 feet when a fault in the air data inertial reference system caused the autopilot to disconnect. AFP



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Pakistani troops kill 25 al-Qaida militants

PESHAWAR — PAKISTANI security forces backed by helicopter gun ships killed more than two dozen al-Qaeda-linked militants in a troubled tribal region on the Afghan border, officials said on Monday.

According to official estimates well over 1,000 militants have been killed in the area since fighting erupted there in August and a military offensive was stepped up last month.

Senior generals have described the area as a "center of gravity" for militants. Isolated guerrillas from Afghanistan and neighboring tribal regions have reinforced their hard-pressed comrades, while security forces have won support from tribal militias to force the militants out of their lands.

The bodies of six tribesmen who had joined a tribal militia were found in the past few days.

Helicopter gun ships and artillery pounded militant positions in a thinly populated forested zone the town of Charmang, which was once used as an Afghan refugee camp.

"The militants had set up bunkers in the camp and have been launching attacks on the security forces from there," a senior government official in Khar, Bajaur's main town, said.

"Twenty-five militants were killed in the air strike," he added.

There have been clashes between the militants and a progovernment tribal militia in Kotkai village near Charmang.

Four tribesmen were killed in the fighting, another government official said. He said several militants were also killed in the fighting but was unsure of the number.

The militants have responded a wave of suicide attacks in recent weeks in an apparent reaction to the offensives mounted against them in Bajaur and the northwestern Swat valley. Reuters

Travolta shoot in Paris canceled after arsonists torch stunt cars

PARIS — A JOHN TRAVOLTA film shoot in a tough Paris suburb has been called off after arsonists torched a fleet of stunt cars in the neighborhood, producers and officials said.

Scenes from the thriller titled "From Paris With Love" were due to shoot in the area this week in Montfermeil, a northeast Paris suburb that was at the epicenter of 2005 youth riots in immigrant-populated French towns.

But production company Europa Corp said late Monday the shoot was "postponed" indefinitely after the dozen cars were burned near the movie set late Sunday night.

A police official said security guards spotted someone with a jerrycan of petrol on the car park where the cars were torched on Sunday night.

Investigators were also looking into rumors of an attempt to blackmail the production firm, owned by French director Luc Besson.

Montfermeil Mayor Xavier Lemoine said he was told the shoot was canceled altogether for security reasons, calling it a "deep disappointment."

The $90-million film began shooting in the Algerian town of Annaba late last month. Directed by Frenchman Pierre Morel, it stars Travolta as a CIA secret agent on a high-risk assignment in Europe, as well as Irish actor Jonathan Rhys-Meyers. AFP

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Therapy helps patients get kidney transplants

WASHINGTON — MANY PEOPLE who need kidney transplants may never get them because their bodies are abnormally primed to attack donated organs.

Now, doctors are trying new ways to outwit the immune system and save more of those so-called "highly sensitized" patients, often with kidneys donated by living donors, considered the optimal kind.

"I feel very lucky. Our son saved my life," said Cynthia Perlob, who lives in a Washington suburb, after an unusual combination of blood cleansing and a cancer drug allowed her to receive a kidney from her son that her body otherwise would have shut down.

IN THIS photo provided by Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, surgeons perform a kidney transplant on Cynthia Perlob on Dec. 2. AP

Promising work

It is promising work that comes as the nation's kidney distribution system is beginning a major overhaul. Together, the two efforts aim to make a long-needed dent in the years of waiting it can take in the United States to get a kidney transplant.

That is crucial, because "your chances of getting successfully transplanted kidneys decrease with time," said Dr. Keith Melancon of Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, Perlob's surgeon and a leader in the small but growing field of incompatible kidney transplants.

More than 77,000 people are on the US waiting list to receive kidneys from deceased donors. Yet fewer than 17,000 transplants a year are performed, about 18,000 of them from deceased donors and just over 6,000 from living donors, relatives or friends who offer help to a specific patient. The wait can stretch four to five years, and more than 4,000 patients die on the waiting list each year.

A transplant starts by matching patient and donor kidney according to blood and tissue type. Today's anti-rejection drugs are so good that tissue-typing can be far from perfect.

Different threat

A different threat is what is called antibody-mediated rejection. Some patients' immune systems are "sensitized": their bodies produce antibodies that are supposedly at attacking most available kidneys.

What causes that? Pregnancy, blood transfusions, a previous transplant, increased time on dialysis. No longer transplanted organ cancer are finding several diseases, a vicious cycle.

New methods

The most antibodies, the better it is to find a compatible kidney. So the quest is to rid patients of antibodies targeted to a specific donated kidney and keep them from making more.

One method: Filtering a patient's blood, called plasma pheresis, before transplant. Another is intravenous immune globulin, or IVIG, a mix of infection-fighting antibodies that "mentally viewed as the bad kidney kind with type-of-the-mill types. They are (mainly) pioneered at a few US hospitals and now slowly spreading.

Not potent enough

That is not potent enough treatment for many super-sensitized patients, so a new experiment is testing the lymphoma drug Rituxan, which fights the antibody-producing cells by killing entire antibody-producing cells.

Cedars-Sinai researchers reported the first preliminary but promising evidence in the New England Journal of Medicine this summer. Rituxan helped enough patients — enough that 16 of 20 patients could be transplanted, and all but one of the new kidneys was working a year later. AP

TRAFFIC snakes up a road in the Sylmar area of the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles on Monday as residents flee their hillside homes that are threatened by fast-moving wildfires.

Nokor restores access of UN inspectors to bomb complex

VIENNA—NORTH KOREA ON Monday restored UN monitors' access to its atom bomb complex and will resume disabling its nuclear reactor on Tuesday, the UN nuclear watchdog said, after a deal with Washington to save the process.

The accord appears to have restored a decade-long nuclear process jeopardized by disputes over verification.

Yukiya Amano, the International Atomic Energy Agency secretary-general confirmed diplomatic reports earlier in the day that North Korea had reinstated IAEA monitors to Yongbyon. Pyongyang had pledged on Sunday to resume steps to eliminate its atomic bomb program in a deal with Washington.

Melissa Fleming, spokesperson for the UN nuclear watchdog, said North Korea had reinstated IAEA monitoring of the five-megawatt reactor, the nuclear fuel fabrication facility and a reprocessing plant that had been producing weapons-grade plutonium.

"Agency inspectors were also informed today that, as of today, Oct. 13, core discharge activities at the reactor would be resumed, monitored by Agency inspectors," she said.

"Once inspectors will also once be permitted to reapply containment and surveillance measures at the reprocessing facility," Fleming said in a statement.

North Korea had barred the inspectors from Yongbon last Thursday in anger over Washington's refusal to remove it from a sponsors-of-terrorism blacklist in a dispute over the extent of verification measures required for denuclearization.

The US State Department announced on Saturday that it had delisted the Stalinist state after Pyongyang agreed to a series of verification steps.

Fleming said the IAEA had now put losses briefed on details of that pact and hoped the accord would open all six nations party to the process—the others are South Korea, Japan, China and Russia—had met to finalize the arrangements.

A Vienna diplomat familiar with the matter said the three inspectors' first job would be to remove the seals of Yongbyon facilities, since Pyongyang had taken steps in recent weeks to inactivate them.

Row over verification

Under a February 2007 disarmament deal with the powers, North Korea was to have been removed from the US blacklist once it provided a full account of its nuclear programs and accepted a system to check its claims.

The isolated, impoverished North wants to be delisted so it can draw from international finances, see a myriad of trade sanctions dropped and use global settlement banks to send money abroad instead of relying on cash-stuffed suitcases.

Reuters

Wildfires threaten LA homes; thousands flee

LOS ANGELES—GIANT WINDdriven brush fires soared out of the foothills and canyons on the southern fringe of Los Angeles on Monday, destroying dozens of homes and threatening hundreds more dwellings.

As Southern California's first big wildfires of the season, a homeless man was found dead with his dog beneath a highway overpass swept by flames, authorities said.

Another person was killed in a collision on a freeway engulfed in smoke as police scrambled to shut down the road.

State of emergency

Late in the day, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency in Los Angeles and Ventura counties, paving additional state resources at the disposal of local fire departments.

The fires of two blazes erupted early on Sunday on the edge of the Angeles National Forest and by midday on Monday had charred roughly 5,000 acres (2,023 hectares) of dusty dry brush and chaparral to the northeast corner of the San Fernando Valley.

Evacuation ordered

Authorities ordered the evacuation of about 1,200 residents from some 450 homes threatened by gale-force Santa Ana gusts blowing in from the high desert, as smoke billowed into the air.

A separate brush fire flared on Monday in the foothills to the west and quickly consumed 3,000 acres, prompting the evacuation of hundreds more homes. Authorities said one flank of that blaze was threatening access of about 1,500 homes.

Dangerous situation

"It's a very dangerous situation," said Los Angeles County Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman.

He cited forecasts of winds expected to reach gusts here overnight and remain strong for days, creating the potential to push the fire across the San Fernando Valley "and perhaps even across to the Pacific Coast."

More than 1,000 firefighters battled the flames, along with helicopters and planes dropping water and fire retardant.

First major outbreak

The twin blazes marked the first major wildfire outbreak in Southern California since 39 raged across the region last September, killing at least 12 people, fueling record evacuations of more than 500,000 people and destroying or damaging some 2,000 homes.

Authorities said about 30 mobile homes and at least one house were gutted in the first of this week's fires, while the second blaze destroyed a number of dwellings. An exact tally of the losses was not immediately available.

Reuters

ARMY Sgt. Gwen Beberg with her puppy Rachel

She wants her puppy home, but US Army won't let her

WASHINGTON—MORE THAN 10,000 people have signed an online petition urging the US Army to let an Iraqi puppy come home with a soldier who fears that the dog (San Rambo) could be killed if left behind.

"I just want my puppy home," Sgt. Gwen Beberg wrote in her mother in the United States in an e-mail on Sunday from Iraq, soon after she was separated from the dog after a mission. "I miss my dog horribly," wrote Beberg, 26, who is scheduled to return to the United States next month.

Beberg's defenders are ratcheting up their efforts to save him. On Monday, the program coordinator for Operation Baghdad Pups, which is run by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals International, left for a trip to the Middle East to try to get the puppy to the United States. And last week, Beberg's congressman, Minnesota Democrat Keith Ellison, wrote to the Army urging it to review the case.

Beberg and another soldier rescued the puppy from a burning pile of trash back in May. Defense Department rules prohibit soldiers in the US Central Command, which includes Iraq, from adopting pets, but has made exceptions. Operation Baghdad Pups says it has gotten 20 dogs and six cats transferred stateside in the last eight months.

"I'm coping reasonably well because I refuse to believe that (Rachel has been hurt)," Beberg wrote in the e-mail to her mother, Melissa Beberg. "If I find out that he was killed, though—well, we just won't mention that possibility."

"They know about the regulations," Beberg said. "But, excuse me, you're not going to throw the puppy back to the burning pile."

AP

The WORLD

Edna Lorenzo B. Guzon

MCCAIN: Tough road ahead.

McCain vows: I'll be back

Unveils new economic plan to overhaul Obama lead

WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA—In a career littered with comebacks, Republican John McCain is now vowing one more Herculean effort to overhaul Barack Obama's commanding poll lead and restore his White House dream.

While the Democratic hopeful for the Nov. 4 election was on Monday rolling out a costly new plan to kick-start the US economy, McCain went back to basics in extolling his own record of heroism and service to a crisis-torn nation.

"I have been written off on so many occasions by political pundits that it's hard for me to count," he told CNN after delivering a wooded stump speech that portrayed Obama as dangerously inexperienced for the challenges at hand.

"I think it is more than a cat. But the point is, we are doing fine. I'm happy with where we are. We are fighting the good fight. That's what it is all about. That's what I love," McCain said.

Ahead of Wednesday's third and final presidential debate, the latest clutch of polls suggested McCain's all-out offensive on Obama's character has dropped with the Democrat now enjoying a double-digit lead overall.

The latest iteration of McCain's campaign address, delivered in the stubbornly at-risk Republican stronghold of North Carolina and Virginia, dropped none of the more inflammatory smacks on Obama of recent days.

'Measuring the drapes'

Instead, he said, Obama was being presumptuous in already "measuring the drapes" for the White House.

"But they forgot to let you decide. My friends, we've got them just where we want them," McCain claimed, having already scrambled back after his campaign for the Republican nomination looked dead and buried in mid-2007.

"I come from a long line of McCains who believed that to lose America is to fight for her," the former Vietnam prisoner of war added.

"I have fought for you most of my life. There are other ways to lose this country but I've never been the kind to die a death by a thousand cuts."

However, the Republican's campaign "was again knocked on the back foot after reports that the chair of the Virginia Republican Party had compared Obama to al-Qaida mastermind Osama bin Laden.

Obama and Bin Laden "both have friends that bombed the Pentagon," state lawmaker Jeffrey Frederick told Virginia campaign volunteers, according to Time magazine, in a reference to 1960s radical Williams Ayers.

McCain, giving a pep talk to campaign workers in Fredericton's Virginia suburbs, also vowed to "whip" Obama's "you know what" in Wednesday's final presidential debate.

Obama used his scrutiny to be dismissed from the issues as he laid out a plan costing up to $175 billion over two years to right the reeling US economy.

He unleashed spectacular gains by global stock markets after New York's Dow index staged its biggest rally in 75 years in response to senators' governments pumping hundreds of billions of dollars into credit-starved banks.

But he added in a statement: "We have not yet solved the financial crisis, and we have barely even begun to solve the crisis facing middle-class families struggling to pay their bills and stay in their homes." AFP

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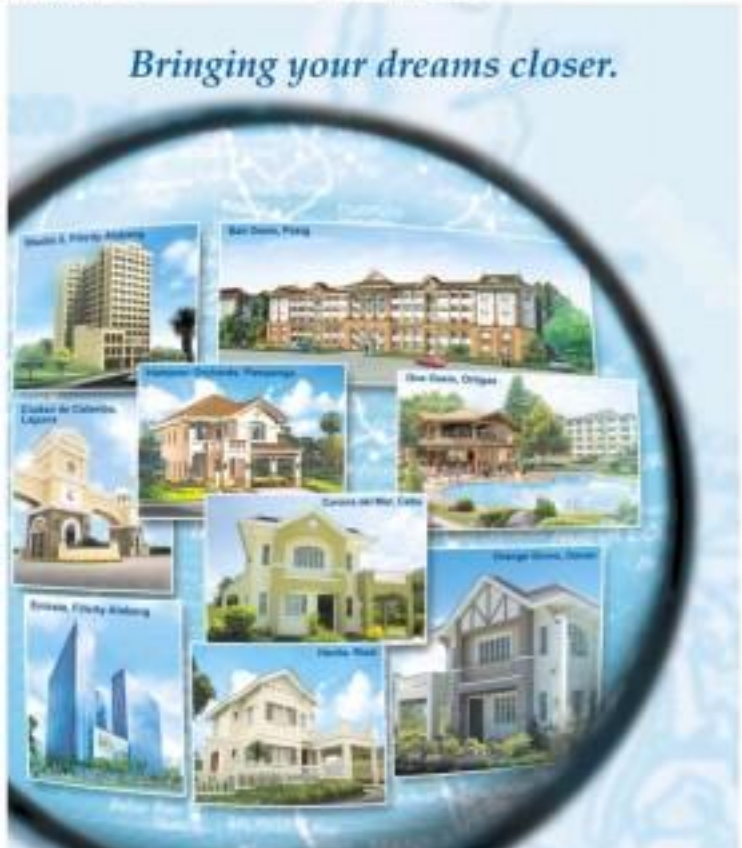

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Thai troops to remain in disputed area, says minister

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S FOREIGN MINISTER on Tuesday denied that about 60 of the country's troops had withdrawn from a disputed area on the border with Cambodia, and insisted they had the right to stay there.

Cambodian military officials earlier said the Thai soldiers had moved out of the contentious area near the ancient Preah Vihear temple, after Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen issued an ultimatum.

"All 60 troops will remain in the disputed area because Thailand has sovereign rights over its territory," Thai Foreign Minister Sompong Amornvivat told reporters.

"Of these 60 troops, 20 of them are mine clearance workers and the rest offer protection for the mine clearance troops. Thailand wishes it has not encroached in any territory."

Ready for confrontation

The Thai army also confirmed up the rhetoric, saying it was prepared for a confrontation with Cambodia if the months-long spat on the border escalated.

"The Thai armed forces agreed to maintain troops in the area because that area is claimed by both Thailand and Cambodia," the army said in a statement.

"The armed forces reaffirmed that all three armed forces—Army, Navy and Air Force—are ready for confrontation in the area and are confident in our potential to defend Thailand's sovereignty," it said.

Tensions between the neighbors flared in July and escalated into a military confrontation when more than 1,000 Cambodian and Thai troops faced off for six weeks in a small patch of land, although both sides in August agreed to reduce troop numbers. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE
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SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molondres Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

COKE VS PUREFOODS

San Miguel tests Rain or Shine

Rays, Phillies score crucial victories /A36

By Mwaeng R. Castillo

RAIN OR SHINE GOT A CHANCE TO PROVE THAT IT IS NO fluke when it faces a severe test in powerhouse San Miguel, which is also hoping to establish a more positive identity today.

The Elasto Painters, in a rematch of 2-0 start that stands as the franchise's best, dug it out with the Beermen, who still sweat out a 98-97, PBA Philippine Cup game at the Araneta Coliseum today, striving to prove that they're more than a team that has lost a combined 37 points lead in the last two games.

While the Painters have been nothing less mundane to their fifth tournament, the Beermen only managed to give a peek of their devastating form before losing steam in their last game against Purefoods, where they led by as many as 20 only to crumble for a 113-106 overtime loss.

Before that, San Miguel debuted on the wrong foot, blowing a 19-point lead in a 81-80 defeat to Alaska.

Game time is 7:30 p.m.

The Tender Juicy Giants, on the other hand, take on Coca-Cola at 5 p.m.

Purefoods nailed its 3rd win in 5 outings, even creeping to within nine points early on but when the roll of the long and hard grind caught up with them.

Meanwhile, not only will Rain or Shine be tested as a team, but super rookies Johnson Idiwanda and Gabe Norwood will also undergo their baptisms of fire against a San Miguel crew that plays two-way defense.

"We have been playing more like a family than a team," Rain or Shine coach Caloy Garcia said. "Starting 2-0 definitely gives us some momentum because we will be playing San Miguel next."

Koreans trip RP tossers

Favorites Japan and China march on with third wins

GAMES TODAY (Philippine time)
8 a.m. — Philippines vs. Thailand
11 a.m. — Australia vs. China
1 p.m. — Indonesia vs. Chinese Taipei
3 p.m. — Japan vs. China
5 p.m. — Korea vs. Kazakhstan

By Cedelf P. Tupaz

THE PHILIPPINES RAMBLED INTO A quicker and stronger South Korean squad and got mauled for the second straight day in the 7th Asian Youth Girls Volleyball Championships.

The seven-playing Koreans, buoyed by the steady performance of setter Lee Na-yeon, scored a 25-15, 25-13, 25-23 victory over the Filipinos yesterday at the start of the classification stage of the quarterfinals at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

The Filipinos' second loss in the 12-team tournament came on a day where defending champion Japan and China sustained their sweep seats with straight-set victories.

Japan routed Chinese Taipei, 25-11, 27-25, 25-16, for its third straight victory—a feat that was last matched by China in 2003 (25-21, 25-22, 25-13 winner over Indonesia).

The NP rosters face Thailand at 9 a.m. today hoping to boost their chances of making the next round against a lighter opponent.

A loss to Thailand will mean the Philippines will meet either China or Japan from the other group in the knockout round.

Thailand barred its strength in a 25-15, 25-23, 25-20, 25-20 throbbing of Australia yesterday. The taller Australians bested the Filipinos in straight sets on Monday.

KOREA'S Korea's Kim Jin-hee smashes the Philippine defense pair up by Kim Fajarito (left) and Alonna Denise Santiago in yesterday's match at the 7th Asian Youth Girls Volleyball Championships at the PhilSports Arena. NOEL ALVIAR

RP coach Francis Vicente said the loss is frustrating especially the Philippines' lack of experience in international competitions.

"They got intimidated," said Vicente. "We really lack experience in international tournaments. But the morale of the girls is not affected by this loss."

The Filipinos managed to put up a fight in the third set when they roared back from 0-7 down to close in at 11-12 on Alonna Santiago's all-spiked spike.

Thanks to six straight Korean errors, they opened six match points and thrashed at 23-24, before Kim Jin-hee sealed the win in 40 minutes.

"We did well," said Korean coach Kim Chang-cheol through an interpreter. "But the Filipinos seemed nervous."

The Koreans actually piled 23 points on errors, but their well-distributed attack kept the Filipinos guessing.

No. 9 RP player Rosabel de Guzman with Alonna Nikkky getting only six kills. Mary Grenalyn failed to duplicate her fine form in the first two games as she was limited to just three kills.

Macapagal coy on full slate for POC elections

By Jun Navarro

INCUMBENT CHEF DE MISSION (CDM) and Philippine Olympic Committee presidential candidate Arthur Macapagal has kept his cards close to his chest exactly a week after incumbent Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. barred his reelection ticket.

Harry Angping, one of Macapagal's chief supporters, said their camp is putting the finishing touches on a solid ticket that could mainly or surpass Cojuangco's slate of 20 national sports associations.

"We're already 90 percent complete and we're looking forward to unveiling (new) opponents so we could win it convincingly," said softball's Angping.

Macapagal arrived from Europe on Sunday afternoon and convened his supporters the next day.

According to Angping, Macapagal already has the backing of 16 NSA heads and is set to secure the support of 10 more to run for the Nov. 26 polls.

"With the way things are going, that number (21 votes) is very achievable," said Angping, who declined to name Macapagal's lineup in an effort to keep Cojuangco's camp guessing.

Angping said Macapagal will reveal their complete ticket a day or two before the deadline for the filing of candidacy on Oct. 26.

Macapagal's bloc has scheduled another meeting on Friday to get the endorsement of the NSA officials who were designated to vote for POC positions.

Angping also claimed that certain NSA heads (or Cojuangco's allies) are not even sure if they're backing to the group.

In announcing the members of his ticket last week, Cojuangco claimed the support of 20 NSA officials.

Susan Papa's crusade

IN HUDDLE
Jayah Cortez

EMPOWERED SUSAN PAPA was proud to announce that the Para Mayon Abdilla L. Jaro Pedro Swim Cup would be entirely free of charge to the participants.

This very rarely happens, both here and abroad, she informed me.

To all the competitors I've joined both as a coach and as a swimmer when I was young, we had to pay for the registration and event fee, among others. Walang libre. In this meet, everything is free. It's Mayor Sus Dedo and the parents of the swimmers who have pledged to support the meet."

* * *

The one-day swimfest will be held on Oct. 25 at the Sun Beds College in Alabang, Muntinlupa, starting at 9 in the morning.

"We expect about 350 entries in 46 events that will include freestyle, butterfly, breaststroke and backstroke," Papa said, stressing that she wants faster paces "in order for the swimmers to achieve their best times."

The age group meet will be divided into five age categories: 6 years and under; 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-17.

* * *

Over a year ago, just as she was planning to retire from active coaching, a colleague talked her into launching an ambitious nationwide swimming program that has never been done in the country before.

The more she listened to the plan, the more she got interested. The goal, first and foremost, was to revive interest in the sport, which had long taken a backseat to other more popular and well-heeled sports.

By the time her colleague ended his dissertation, Susan had shelved her retirement plans out the window.

With the invaluable help of Boy and Teresa Alvarez, parents of her swim students Vienne and Mika, Susan set out to draft a detailed long-range program that includes year-round meets, competitions, regular intersquads teams and at least one international event.

The ultimate objective was to train and produce homegrown talents good enough to compete in the biggest home and international swimming competitions.

As far as paperwork was concerned, everything was accomplished. Most important of all, the Philippine Amateur Swimming Association gave its blessing to the formation of the Philippine Swim League Inc.

I know for a fact that Susan and company had gone as far as sending out expensive colored flyers and solicitation letters to prospective sponsors last year for their first project, the Alon Campus Invitational Swim Meet. However, something or someone got in the way.

Some of the many glitches encountered was the Philippine Swim League fell by the wayside.

* * *

About two months ago, Susan called to announce the good news that the PSL was being resurrected and that the first event in the calendar was the Mayor's Cup. The Alvarezes were still standing by her side and were doing most of the organizational work.

Actually, I was a little worry. Instead once, I reminded her to be twice cautious.

She assured me there would be no obstacles. Her time around. "Relax na tayo na," she said.

Yesterday she called me again to say that everything was finally okay. She even invited me to see the Sun Beds Aquacampus.

San Pedro, who has been an supporter of the league, will be the guest of honor.

By noon I expect to be in Alabang to join Abe Hog, Mayor Vic Sotto, Boy, councilor Alex Marquez and other PSL big-wigs in their medical session.

* * *

SCOOPING: Dr. John Lim, resident physician of the Red Doll Rookie, requested for prayers for his uncle William Ong who remains comatose at the Cardinal Santos Hospital. Dr. Lim said Willie was suffering from aneurysm or irregular heartbeat and got he continued to play basketball ... Mel Antolino has also asked for prayers for his uncle Boy Abbie who is now based in New Jersey. Boy was diagnosed with lung cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy.

Hoya won't alter style for Manny

By Ray Luarca

LEGENDARY MEDICAL TRAINER IGNACIO "NACHO" BERIS feels no need for major changes in Oscar De La Hoya's fighting style when the pay-per-view king tangles with Filipino ring icon Manny Pacquiao on Dec. 6 at the MGM Grand Arena in Las Vegas.

In an interview with ESPN Sports Radio's Dennis Principe Monday morning, Beristain insisted that De La Hoya's edge in reach, size and power will be more than enough to overcome Pacquiao's blinding hand speed when they collide at 147 pounds.

Speaking through interpreter Jaime Quintana, a Mexican pro-money flyweight and the 35-year-old De La Hoya's experienced and talent hunks working with him a luxury.

"It's easy for me," said Beristain, a Hall of Fame trainer who has worked the corner of 16 world champions. "Training him (De La Hoya) is like polishing or shaping a diamond. Technically, he won't change because he has his style as a fighter."

Beristain also scoffed at reports that Pacquiao, who dethroned WBC 130 lb champion Erwin Ilan in June, intends to step to the welterweight class after his rematch bout with De La Hoya.

"After what will happen on Dec. 6, Pacquiao will be more than willing to move down to 135 or 130 because he is going to get a tremendous beating," he said.

Reports from Hollywood, where Pacquiao is deep in training at trainer Freddie Roach's Wild Card Gym, however, indicate that Pacquiao has an intention of returning to the lower divisions.

Pacquiao even named Juan Manuel Marquez, Beristain's protege whom he lost for the WBC super featherweight crown in March, to climb to 147 lb if he really wants a third fight.

Meanwhile, the WBC honored its Lifetime Achievement Award on Roach during a special luncheon and fund raising on Oct. 13 at the WBC Legends of Boxing Event in San Bernardino, California.

As reported by Philboxing.com's Dr. Ed de la Riga on Tuesday, Roach sent a friend, Miguel Salazar, to receive the award on his behalf as the latter coincided with Pacquiao's regular training hours at Wild Card.

Pacquiao is mainly responsible for the Trainer of the Year awards awarded Roach by the Boxing Writers Association of America in 2003, 2006 and 2007.

Also honored by the WBC, headed by Mexican Jose Sulaiman, were 92-year-old trainer and cutman Ulrich Bodak, cutman Tony Rivera and announcer Carlos Aviles. Former super lightweight John Montes Jr. was inducted to the Hall of Fame.

TWAINERS Freddie Roach (right), with Manny Pacquiao, holds the plaque and trophy awarded to him by the WBC on Saturday. —PHILBOXING.COM

UST, La Salle tossers rejoin V-League fray

By Ronnie S. Andrin

THE RETURN OF THREE-TIME champion University of Santo Tomas and La Salle and the introduction of new rules are just two reasons why the second conference of the Shakey's V-League women's volleyball promises to be another blockbuster.

The inaugural champion Tigresses stood academic pressures as well as the stroke suffered by coach Angeni Sarmiento is skipping this year's first conference to be with her family.

On the other hand, the second and third season winners Lady Archers did not seem to field a lineup made up mostly of rookies.

The seventh offering of the first intercollegiate volleyball tournament for women, open to Div. I's at The Arena in San Juan.

"They're fresh and we know they prepared well," said Sports Alumni's Ricky Dalao yesterday during the weekly PSA Forum at Shakey's GN dominic. "Everybody expects them to come out very strong."

Under the new rules, one of the two guest players should be an alumnus who had seen action in previous V-League editions. In the case of rookie-squad College of St. Benilde, its alumna should have played in the NCAA.

The alumna and guest players may be replaced at any time during the preliminary round.

Tigers open wild-card bid vs Saints

By Cedolf P. Tipon

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS HOPES TO make up for its fifth place finish in the UNAF event as the Tigers open for a wild-card slot in the PBCR Flying V "Season 10" Final Challenger starting today at the Makati Coliseum.

The Tigers, who struggled in the UNAF seven with a formidable lineup led by Jerry Cruz and Dylan Ababou, open their campaign against the St. Claire Saints in a semifinals clash that is part of a heavy four-game bill.

Four wild-card berths for the two zonal competitions of the Smart PLDT-PBC Philippine Collegiate Champions League are at stake in the short, eight-team tournament.

The Tigers have been grouped with St. Francis of Assisi, Las Piñas College and St. Claire, while the other bracket is composed of Perlas Agamindo College, JCT College, De Ocampo and Lyceum of the Philippines.

The top two squads from each bracket will gain the wild-card berths.

The curtain-raiser at 9 a.m. pits FAC against De Ocampo with Lyceum struggling with JCT in the next match at 10:30 a.m.

St. Francis takes on LPC in the last match at 1:30 p.m.

Philippine Collegiate Champions League national tournament director Joe Lipa said four zonal championships have been set with the top two teams in each zone advancing to the finals.

The Tigers are hoping to become the second UAAP team to clinch a place in the finals.

The early finalists in the tournament's 8-nd phase include UAAP-title teams Blue Eagles, NCAA champion San Beda Red Lions, La Salle Green Archers, Jose Rizal Heavy Bombers, University of Visayas Green Lancers, San Sebastian College-Lyceto Bayeras, Manuel L. Quezon University Stallions and the Universal College of Nursing Golden Dragons.

The Far Eastern University Tamaraws are already entered in the zonal phase.

Details about the PCCL can be accessed by logging in at www.CollegiateChampionship.net.

Tonyt paces Cangolf Open

FORMER NATIONAL CHAMPION ANdoy "Tonyt" Fernando buggyed the last hole to settle for an even-par 72 and a one-stroke lead over Peter Villober after the first round of the ninth Candaluong Amateur Open Golf Championship at Cangolf's north course yesterday.

Fernando, coming off seven finishes in tournaments here and overseas, mixed four birdies with a double bogey and tepide effort gave him a 37-35 card.

Villober, Fernando's ICTSI teammate, also struggled in the tough playing conditions, dropping a stroke on his 16-to-salvage a 73.

Dante Bautista, another ICTSI lee joining up for his defense of the Hong Kong Amateur Open crown next week, bombed a three-over 38 at 75, his round marred by a double bogey on No. 3 and three bogeys.

He erased two shots off the pace along with Jim Hawa's Ian Mallory and defending champion Bernard Abalos of Cabuyao.

Mallory fought back from a four-over par card with two birdies in the last five holes while Abalos had three bogeys against a birdie in a 39-36 round.

The other scores:

75—Jaime Arellano, Mark Sarmiento, Dominic Ojales, Jose Ramos; 76—Dave Gamayong, Jesus Ojales; 77—Chris Bitanga, Dr. Aiden Cadiz, Bob Villanueva; Dan Bangi, Cito Barrogo; 78—Tommy Mendoza, Lee Hua, Jerry Pelaez, Ed Arbolo, Phil Erlanza.

UST, St. Scho fives share WBL lead

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS AND ST. Scholastica's College blasted separate foes to post the weekend at the Xavier School gym to lead the opening day winners in the Women's Basketball League (WBL).

UST thumped University of the Philippines-Los Baños, 73-58, while SSC leaned on its solid frontline to down rival Assumption College, 62-48, in the Collegiate bowl.

St. Scholastica's Pearl Angeli Mallorca squeezed with 22 points and drew strong support from Tender Bonnevie and Jeanne Reyes, who combined for 26 points.

In the High School-Competitive division, St. Scholar School ruched Assumption, 66-34, and then Bonifacio Academy clipped St. Theresa's College, 46-43, for the Group A lead.

Brendan E. Andrin

HERNANDO

TWAINERS Freddie Roach (right), with Manny Pacquiao, holds the plaque and trophy awarded to him by the WBC on Saturday. —PHILBOXING.COM

HERNANDO

HERNANDO

HERNANDO

SPORTS

TAMPA Bay's Carl Crawford tries to stay down Boston's Jason Varitek as he tries to score on a single by Dioner Navarro in the eighth inning. Varitek, however, managed to get the out.

Armstrong signs up for Giro d'Italia

ROME—LANCE ARMSTRONG AGREED MONDAY TO RIDE IN NEXT year's Giro d'Italia and suggested the Italian race—not the Tour de France—will be the main target in his comeback season.

The American has never competed in the three-week Giro, considered the sport's most prestigious stage race after the Tour. AP

Rays rout Red Sox

Phillies climb to 3-1 behind Stairs

BOSTON—THE POWER-PACKED TAMPA BAY RAYS HIT FOUR HOME runs over the Green Monster or Fenway Park to beat the Boston Red Sox, 9-1, in the Major League Baseball playoffs on Monday.

BJ Upton, Evan Longoria, Rocco Baldelli and Carlos Pena sent shots over the fabled left-field wall for a 2-1 lead in the American League Championship Series.

The Rays put the defending World Series champions in a precarious hole for the first time since Boston overcame a 3-1 deficit against Cleveland last year to win the AL pennant.

The Rays also hit hard on the baseballs. Carl Crawford bombed seven Boston catcher Jason Varitek on a play at the plate—there was an immediate reprisal in a matchup between teams that have fought in the past.

Matt Garza, the only Tampa Bay pitcher to lose in the first round series against the Chicago White Sox, held the Red Sox scoreless through six innings before they made it 3-1 in the seventh.

Upton hit a three-run homer in the third inning, his fifth homer of the playoffs. One out later, Longoria hit his fourth home run of the postseason, tying a rookie record set by Miguel Cabrera in 2003.

Suddenly shaky Boston pitcher Jon Lester, who hadn't allowed a run in his last six first postseason outings—including last year's Game 4 World Series clincher against Colorado—gave up four earned runs on eight hits in 5 2/3 innings.

Phillies 7, Dodgers 5

In Los Angeles, Shane Victorino and much-traveled pinch-hitter Matt Stairs hit two-run homers off two of Los Angeles' most reliable relievers in the eighth inning, lifting Philadelphia over the Dodgers and into a 3-1 lead in the National League championship series.

It was the first time the visiting team has won a game in 12 meetings between the teams this year.

Phillies ace Cole Hamels, who won the series opener, can pitch Philadelphia into its first World Series in 15 years Wednesday in Game 5. He'll be opposed by Game 2 loser Chad Billingsley.

Eleven teams in baseball history have come back from 3-1 deficits to win a best-of-seven postseason series—two in the NLCS.

With a runner at first and one out in the eighth, Victorino lined Cory Wade's first pitch into the right field bullpen in the game on a 3-1 count. Jonathan Broxton tried to throw a 3-1 fastball past Stairs, and the 41-year-old lefthanded hitter drove it halfway up the the right-field pavilion to put the Phillies ahead. AP

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PHILADELPHIA'S Jimmy Rollins (top) leaps over Los Angeles' James Loney to complete a double play.

Thais crush RP booters

THE PHILIPPINES SUFFERED THE MOST lopsided loss in the preliminary round of the AFF Women's Championship Monday when it absorbed a 12-0 beating from Thailand at the Thanh Long Stadium in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The Filipinas were helpless as inexperienced stand-in keeper Rachelle De los Reyes, who replaced the suspended Shiela Mercado, couldn't handle a torrid Thai attack that netted as early as the opening minute through Duwaeng Chidwuan.

Mercado and Rachelle Latap were shown red cards for unsportsmanlike play in the 3-0 defeat to Australia Saturday night.

The early Thai incursion stirred up memories of the 7-1 hearing received by the Filipinas in the AFC Women's Cup second round.

And things turned for the worse as the Thais sustained their charge with four goals inside the opening 20 minutes.

By the time another field player, Samantha Vicma took over from Dolor Reyes in the 45th minute, the Thais were already up, 5-0.

So a promising start—the Filipinas beat Singapore, 3-0, in the opener...ended in disappointment once again in the 90 beaten were unable to result the next round of the international tournament.

Thailand will play Vietnam in the semifinals, while Australia faces Myanmar for the other semifinal slot. *Gerald B. Tapao*

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BUSINESS
Editor Raul G. Marcelo ■ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

Financial crisis takes toll on insurance sales

Demand for single-pay, unit-linked plans down sharply

By Dexter L. Lusaya

THE LOCAL INSURANCE industry has experienced a sharp decline in the sale of so-called "unit-linked insurance plans"—until recently the world's hottest products—as the financial crisis has made investors more averse to risk.

Instead, more and more buyers of insurance policies are reverting to traditional life plans, which are perceived to be more secure and set longer term in nature, according to officials of the Philippine Life Insurance Association (PLIA).

In a briefing presenting PLIA officials said that members firms were embedding their marketing efforts to make up for the general slowdown in insurance policy sales due to the crisis.

"What we are seeing now is a slowdown in some areas [of the insurance business]," said PLIA director Henry Joseph Herrera.

In particular, he noted a decline in the demand for unit-linked plans, which had attracted strong interest

FINANCIAL B3

Sumitomo eyes 2nd nickel plant in RP

By Amy R. Borja

SUMITOMO METAL MINING CO. LTD. OF Japan and local firm Nickel Asia Corp. are finalizing plans to put up a second nickel-processing plant in Surigao del Norte that is estimated to cost $1.7 billion.

At the sidelines of the 8th Asia Pacific Mining Conference, Nickel Asia president Gerard H. Brimo said the high-pressure acid leach (HPAL) plant would be constructed near its Taganito nickel mine.

"We are expecting that Sumitomo will shortly give the go ahead for the project, by end-October, despite the difficult times we are experiencing worldwide," Brimo said. "I believe they will move ahead."

Brimo said the second plant would have a capacity of 30,000 metric tons of nickel a year, or triple the size of the first facility in Pulanduta.

The first plant was put up in 2005 through Coral Bay Nickel Corp., which is 60 percent owned by Sumitomo and 10 percent by Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corp. Nickel Asia owns 60 percent of Rio Tuba.

"The first plant came on stream in 2005 and was the most successful in the world because it achieved a capacity of 10,000 tons of contained nickel a year. The plant is being expanded to 20,000 tons of contained nickel annually. Expansion is seen to come on stream by March 2009," Brimo said.

All output from the plant are shipped to Sumitomo in Japan, according to Coral Bay president Takanori Fujimoto.

Meanwhile, Brimo noted that on a combined basis, the two plants would be able to supply 7 percent of the world's nickel output.

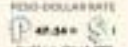
"The second plant may come on stream by 2012—it's a three-year project," he added, adding that Nickel Asia was planning to have as much as a 30-percent stake

SUMITOMO B3

CURRENCIES

OCTOBER

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B4)

$12.6-B mining investments seen by 2013

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT SAID IT expects investments in the mining sector to reach $12.6 billion by 2013 despite the adverse effects of a global credit crunch.

In a speech during the 8th Asia Pacific Mining Conference and Exhibition, Environment Secretary Lito Atienza said they had recently reviewed the country's priority projects and reviewed targets given the "changes in timing of some of the major projects as well as events in the global arena."

Atienza said that in the first half of the year, mining investments reached $261 million. There are currently 68 mining, processing and exploration projects and 73 purely exploration projects for that poured in some $1.72 billion since 2004.

"Should our projections prove true, we expect our 2011 copper production to rise four times that of 2007, chromite production to 1.7 times that of 2007, gold to twice, or around 2.7 million ounces and silver to around 5.25 million ounces," he said.

He added that direct nickel ore production might decline by about 20 percent of the 2007 level but the nickel concentrate production could expand tenfold with additional nickel-processing plants coming on stream.

Atienza said the government was also expecting cobalt and zinc concentrate production of 4,000 MT and 20,000 MT.

B-3 on BUSINESS

$12.6-B mining . . .

From page B1

respectively, by 2011.

"The sector's productive volume will reportedly raise the production value of the minerals industry (and) is projected to reach over $16 billion," Antonio noted.

"It is expected that at such level, the Philippine minerals industry's contribution to Philippine exports will be over 6 percent, enough for the Philippines to be classified as a mining country by 2013," he pointed out.

Amy R. Remo

Credit crunch, Lopez style

Biz Buzz
By the staff

ADRIFT FROM PHILADELPHIA, the other hot item—albeit one shared only in whispers—during the Management Association of the Philippines' Global CEO Conference is the glowing worry over the Lopez group's financial condition.

The group's listed geothermal unit, First Gen, needs to refinance $740-million worth of short-term loans, with $408 million coming due next month. The funds were used when First Gen bought PNOC-EDC with a P88.5-billion bid last November.

The Lopez group have been going around trying to reassure jittery bankers that 70 percent of the funding has already been raised and that they're in the process of sealing the balance. But the credit crunch leaves many bruised, tasting their eyebrows so to whether they're selling the truth is mostly bluffing.

Whatever the (expert) get the funds from—if they get it—don't expect it to come in the form of an equity-linked loan. The Lopezes bought EDC at P8.75 a share, while the market price has dropped to P3.05 apiece—a whopping 68-percent decline.

Jocelyn L. Lucas

Cyber war

STILL ON the Lopezes, the website of publicly listed First Philippine Holdings Corp. was hacked last week, temporarily disrupting its services. According to officials of the Lopez-controlled firm, the website was defaced by parties yet unknown, resulting in all sorts of gibberish and text being posted on the site. Fearing that the perpetrators would use the hacked site to deliver viruses or misinformation to the public, the company shut it down for several days.

It remains unclear whether the hacking was a random act (there have been several local attacks in recent months) or was done in time for the

Dr. Michael J. Antony

last—part of the ongoing fight for control of blenders with the government. **Darwin L. Lucas**

Too good to pass up

ASHAF Augusto Zobel dy Ayala II (or Jaja) left in a great hurry after his speaking engagement during the MAP conference last week, where he confirmed the Ayala group's interest to bid for Philamlife during the Q&A session. Supposedly, he was to attend an important executive committee meeting of Bank of the Philippine Islands, which he chairs. The agenda? The most exciting M&A opportunity to hit the country since Philamlife—or the group's own.

BPI, the oldest bank in Southeast Asia (it even preceded the local central banking system and was once the official issuer of the Philippine peso during the Spanish era), has grown through organic expansion and a long list of acquisitions over the years. Its last M&A was in 2006 when it bought Prudential Bank from the Samsu family.

Boris C. Bonchan

M&A catalyst

GSIS' interest in Philamlife was something that many analysts didn't factor in during our early survey of potential suitors. But those who do recall the state-run insurance giant's role in large M&As in recent corporate history—from the time the Go family's Equitable Bank gobbled up the much bigger DO Bank in the late 1990s (before Winston Garcia's time) to the course of the Go family and the eventual takeover of BPI/Bank by local tycoon to Henry Sy's Banco de Oro. And don't forget GSIS' dramatic foray into blue chip Meralco recently. Watch out for the emergence of new tie-ups and consortia.

Boris C. Bonchan

Life after Philam

PHILAMLIFE CEO Joey Cuisia was asked during the MAP CEO conference about his personal plans after AIG completes the sale of its local crown jewel. It depends on the new owners, Cuisia said. He also dodged a "multiple choice" question from moderator **Tutok Manansig** on whether he preferred working for Jaja, Henry Sy or Winston Garcia. (Cuisia must be trying very carefully to case it would be any of them.)

But after retirement, Cuisia says he'd like to spend more time doing non-profit work with outfits like Gerard Salinga and help Jose Estanislao promote good governance through the Institute of Corporate Directors.

Boris C. Bonchan

Feeling alluded to

THE PUBLICITY of SMS president Winston Garcia culled last week to start to a blind item rebuttal, he said, was affecting his boss. According to PR man Willy Bernardino, pix Garcia has to disappear to watch the inauguration of Wanindu Obo (see there, but with his son Jared not a female companion that the blind item linked to this "influential government financial institution head"). Moreover, the publicist said that the trip of Garcia and his son to the city-state was paid for by a firm that had "absolutely no dealings" with the government pension fund.

Incidentally, Development Bank of the Philippines president Reynaldo David was called to say—with his signature mischievous chuckle—that he received one hell of a ribbing from friends who were wondering if he was indeed the "influential" person referred to.

Darwin L. Lucas

Phiex face-off

RUMBLETS surfaced are brewing that the Social Security System (SSS)—which recently vanished the spotlight from television mistard Waltzed V. Pangilinan in Phiex Mining Corp.—is not keen on seeing its stake in the country's most profitable gold and copper producer.

For one, the financial costs are enormous. Why cancel a mass lawsuit from its members to buy Phiex at a premium of P1.72 a share (same) on yesterday's closing price of P6.20 each (against the P7.92-a-share offer by First Metro)? SSS would also need to cough up roughly P1.8 billion to subscribe to its pro rata share of 24 percent out of the additional stocks to be issued by Phiex.

SSS head honcho Romulo Neri said yesterday that pending the receipt of the offer terms, SSS executives to meet over the possible additional investment in Phiex as its investment staff studies the revised offer.

But the most compelling talk in the market is that the recent face-off between Neri and MVP exec Phiex exec deeper than the ZTE controversy (which prompted the latter to block the former's entry into the PLDT board). Talk is that the country's chief executive is not likely to vote in Neri on this issue because she has "inherent feelings" for the telecom magnate ... for supporting PGA's 2004 presidential bid.

Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

Sumitomo . . .

from page B1

in the second facility.

The plant will source nickel ore from the Taganito mine, which has more than 100 million tons of low-grade nickel laterite and an expected mine life of 30 years, Ibtimi said.

Pahimco said they intended to raise the $1.7 billion through equity and borrowings from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation and other private banks.

Locked & Loaded: Protect your investment!

Investing in today's times seems like a daunting proposition. The impact of the sub-prime crisis in the U.S. has caused the downfall of financial "giants" and has sent shockwaves across the global markets. Stock market indices across the world have dropped significantly in such a short period of time.

This has created an investment environment that is full of fear, doubt, and uncertainty. With such well-respected investment banks and institutions declaring bankruptcy or needing a bail-out plan, it is no surprise that today's ordinary investors are afraid that their own investments will fail.

"In my adult lifetime, I don't think I've ever seen people as fearful economically as they are right now," said the richest man in the world, 78-year-old Warren Buffet, Chairman & CEO of Berkshire Hathaway, and considered to be the world's greatest investor, in an exclusive interview with broadcast journalist Charlie Rose earlier this month.

"They have seen the credit markets seize up. They've gotten worried about money market funds," he explains further. "They've seen 8% of the bank deposits of the United States get moved within the last couple of weeks from institutions that they thought were fine a few months ago to other institutions."

"They're not wrong to be worried," he concluded.

The ordinary Filipino investor has not been spared from the effects of this global financial crisis.

As such, Filipinos right now are looking for an investment instrument that will give them the chance to substantially grow their hard-earned money but without the risk of having that money dwindle to nothing, especially in these market conditions. In short, Filipinos want to protect their investment while making their money grow.

What Filipino investors need right now is an investment that is "*Locked & Loaded*."

To help address the current needs of the Filipino investor, AXA Philippines, one of the largest and the fastest-growing life insurers in the country today, is offering its *Locked & Loaded* capital-protected investment for a limited time only.

Locked & Loaded is an investment-linked insurance product offer that protects 100% of the capital or principal invested, regardless of how difficult market conditions can get. For only a short holding period of 5 years, this gives Filipino investors the freedom and confidence to grow their money worry-free, knowing that they cannot lose a single penso of their investment!

And since this will be invested in AXA's specially designed *Locked & Loaded Fund*, investors get the chance to grow their money through high-grade government bonds, money-market instruments, and blue chip stocks!

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AXA tops local VLIP market

Latest reports from the Insurance Commission website showcase AXA Philippines' dominance in the variable life insurance category with a reported premium income of PhP13.1 billion, almost double its PhP7.8 billion output in 2006, and a market share of over 42%. The only company to have posted a variable premium income over PhP5.2 billion for 2007, AXA Philippines introduced variable life insurance products in 2003. Variable life insurance, the new breed of life insurance products, invests a portion of the premiums in bonds, equities and money market funds.

The upsurge was attributed mainly to the insurance company's aggressive 60% growth in total premium income in 2007. AXA Philippines also reported an increase in overall market share to 22% from 16% the previous year. Considered the fastest growing life insurer in the country, AXA nearly tripled its business in the past two years and broke into the top two spot of the total premium income rankings, surpassing some of the most established insurers in the Philippines.

The Insurance Commission rankings, which are based on premium income, show that the life insurance industry grew by 11.8% in 2007 with a total of P34.1 billion versus the P33.4 billion it totaled in 2006. Growth in the industry was spurred by the increased contribution of the variable life insurance category which now accounts for nearly half (48%) of total premium income, a huge increase considering that the category only contributed 27% last year.

Stock market gains 7.3%

Calaca sale completion seen by end of '08

By Abigail L. Ho

NATIONAL POWER CORP HAS COMMITted to make the necessary repairs on the 600-megawatt Calaca coal-fired power plant, to pave the way for the asset's turnover to winning bidder Emerald Energy Corp.

Napocor president Froilan Tangunan said the biggest stumbling block to the completion of the transaction was the present condition of the generation asset.

"Both Napocor and Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.[ ] are working to make sure that we meet the conditions that would bring about the turnover. We should be able to do it within the year," he told reporters.

In an interview when he was still vice president at PSALM, Tangunan said the winning bidder had expressed concern that it might not be able to take full advantage of the plant upon turnover since one of the generation facility's units was not working.

"When we auctioned off the plant, we said it would be sold on an 'as is, where is' basis. Now we can't turn the plant over to the winning bidder with one unit not operating. This is really one of the biggest stumbling blocks," he said in an earlier interview.

Once repairs on the plant are completed, PSALM will be able to turn the plant over to the Ilaya Townhall-led consortium, paving the way for the remittance of at least 40 percent of the $786.53-million bid.

Also an issue is the "artificially low" electricity rates but this is now being addressed, he said.

"We are petitioning for an adjustment in our basic rate, as well as the deferred or accounting adjustments. We've filed those because we want to make our adjustments current. Under the guidelines of [the Energy Regulatory Commission], we are supposed to make quarterly filings, and we are making more than one filings are current," he said.

"We are working on having approvals on [our generation rate adjustment mechanism and incremental currency exchange rate adjustment] until June 2009. I do not want to preempt the actions of the ERC on those, as they will still conduct public hearings. It will be a nonadversarial process, and whatever they will decide to issue, we will follow," he added.

Europe's $2.3-T lifeline for banks boosts confidence

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PHILIPPINE SHARE PRICES YESterday closed 7.3% percent up, in line with the global rebound in stock prices following Europe's move to set aside a $2.3-trillion lifeline for ailing banks.

"Everybody is quite bullish," Eddie Ching, president of Lucky Securities, said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange index lost 154.9 points to 2,273.48.

The 7.3-percent gain yesterday was the highest percentage increase in share prices after Aug. 21, 2007, when the market posted a 9.62-percent growth.

The broader All Shares index also jumped 4.6 percent or 68.1 points to 1,549.56.

Value turnover yesterday hit P5.8 billion, with 1.67 billion shares traded.

Gainers recorded losers 181 against 16.

"The market got a boost of confidence from the actions in the United States and Europe with every government plan to purchase shares of banks," said Jose Vitug of ADCapital Securities Inc.

"The ones being pressured are the banking issues as with the governments' commitment to come in and support banking shares, this provided some relief and confidence for investors," he said.

"There's optimism that panic selling is at least subsiding and that there will be a more orderly disposal of assets," ATR Kim Eng Securities president Lorenzo Reyes said.

"I think the general market sentiment is much better now as the various countries in Europe stand behind their banks. However, this is still just a relief rally as the numbers were extended last week," Citinomics.com president Cinnabu Ram said.

Ram also said concerns over the impact of a global economic recession would likely continue to dampen investor confidence.

"There's optimism that the worst is over for now at least for the stock markets, but the US economy will go into recession for sure," Single Equities Inc. president Joseph Besas said.

The PSEi hit a day-high of 2,303.56 yesterday posting a 173.01 point gain in mid-session before closing at 2,273.55, 68% a report from AFP.

OceanaGold seeks more funds for Didipio

By Jory R. Reyes

AUSTRALIAN MINING FIRM OceanaGold Corp. is confident it would be able to secure the $185 million in additional funds needed to continue operations at the Didipio copper-gold mine in Nueva Vizcaya within the year.

As the subsidiary of the 6th Asia Pacific Mining Conference, OceanaGold VP for communications and external affairs Ulrike Steiner said the company had tapped Stanley Morgan to help in choosing the "best package."

"We are looking at several options because the interested parties have different offers. It can be a buyout or purchase of a minority stake," Ocean said.

OceanaGold suspended operations/activities at the mine site on June 24 to preserve cash until additional funding could be obtained. It said the cost of commissioning the Didipio project had increased to $320 million from $135 million due to changes in project scope, foreign exchange movements and inflation, resulting in a funding shortfall of $185 million.

Steiner said the firm had shortlisted four prospective investors.

Manila Water

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† Investors may obtain a copy of the Prospectus for the offer from Underwriters named above.

Mine firms appeal for state help amid crisis

By Dinky L. Lucas

THE UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL mining firms yesterday urged government to extend the regime in Cebu's most populous city to the mining industry in order to cushion its growth amid the global economic crisis.

The sharp decline in the prices of industrial metals has sparked fears of a broad shutdown in the industry, even as the price of gold—a traditional safe-haven asset—has remained strong.

"The resource sector continues to be a most stable industry because it is not economic-driven," Chamber of Mines of the Philippines president Benjamin Philip G. Romualdez said. "Minerals, metals and other materials commodities are the basic building blocks of infrastructure."

Romualdez, who also heads the Association of Mining Associations (Ama) said the industry wants to use the ongoing regional mining summit to raise "important issues for Asian governments to address."

The 2nd Asian Mineral Mining on Minerals (AMMin) and the 9th Asian Science Officials Meeting on Minerals (Asamm) are being held in Manila this week. Major industry players are also in town for the 8th Asia-Pacific Mining Conference and Exhibition (APMEC), which is hosted by Ama.

For the industry to move forward, Ama has urged Asian governments to facilitate measures to improve liquidity of the financial markets.

"Government needs to ... provide liquidity to financial institutions so the developmental cycle is not delayed," he said, explaining that financing difficulties could lead to tighter supply of minerals and the ores.

Romualdez also urged Asian governments to maintain a resilient and globally competitive tariff code on mining products.

"Asian needs to be a competitive block," he said. "We should not be played against each other. Our fiscal policies should be uniform for us to be able to compete with the United States and others."

Financial ...

From page B1

from climax in the past, in part because they involved only single payments as opposed to periodic payments for traditional insurance products.

"Sales of single-pay, unit-linked [products] have weakened," said Herrera, who is also the president and CEO of the local unit of Canadian insurer Manulife Financial.

Pioneer Guarantee Life Insurance Co. president and former Pldt chief Peter Cosiaco noted that demand for "single-pay" products had declined sharply to the extent that those products were no longer on top of insurers' sales figures.

"Before, over 50 percent of the industry's new sales were 'single pay'," he said. "Not anymore."

Also known as "variable unit-linked" products, these investments were offered by many of the country's biggest firms like Sicolife's Sun Flexilink and Pesolife, Insular's Insular Flexilink and Prudential International's Manulife's Variable Universal Life product, and similar instruments offered by the local unit of Phs Life UK and AXA Philippines.

In a traditional life insurance plan, the premiums, cash values and death benefits are fixed, with the insurer determining where to invest the funds. In a variable life plan, premiums and death benefits are flexible and cash values depend on the investment performance of the funds chosen by the insurer.

However and current Pldt president Gerardo Menzalo noted that buyers were flocking back to traditional life insurance products because of the market volatility, which is affecting the yield of single-pay policies.

Officials of the group explained that during times of market volatility, investors were more inclined to buy life insurance policies where the risk is borne by the insurer, rather than single-pay policies where the bulk of both risk and reward accrue to the policyholder.

As part of the industry's marketing effort, Pldt members reiterated the safety of insurance policies as a form of investment amid widespread concern about the stability of the industry.

Miner eyes Leyte copper deposits

By Amy R. Remo

CANADIAN MINING FIRM PHILIPPINE Metals Corp. plans to invest at least $300,000 to initially explore copper deposits in Leyte.

At the sidelines of the 5th Asia Pacific Mining Conference and Exhibition, PMC vice president for operations Tom Wellhausen said that the firm could spend that amount for an airborne geological survey alone.

"It's difficult to say how much we will be investing for sure until we get our exploration permits," Wellhausen explained. "We still have to do field sampling and other tests, so most likely, we will spend slightly higher than $300,000 for the whole exploration work."

PMC, a private Canadian mineral exploration and development company, was established to carry out exploration and development of gold and base metal deposits in the Philippines.

Wellhausen said they are currently awaiting the issuance of their exploration permit for Leyte, which they expect to receive at least "shortly after the New Year."

PMC documents show that the company seeks to fully acquire the Tuaras-Sulit sulphide project, located in the mountainous areas of Kiang-ulang, Barrio Pe, Pilit-o and Tadoban City, in Leyte. The mineral site, which is said to have a massive sulphide belt, covers 9,895 hectares.

According to PMC, acquiring the whole project, covered under two separate agreements, may amount to $1.37 million.

PMC said it plans to conduct a systematic soil geologic mapping program to complement with a rail and rock sampling program.

Also, PMC is eyeing copper deposits at the Mahiao mine in Calintaan, Kalinga-Apayao, covering 971 ha, as well as the Oling Mine in Tubo, Abra. Wellhausen said.

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BSP: Storm may be far from over

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD HAS LIKELY SEEN THE worst of the global financial meltdown, but the storm is "far from over," according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which maintained a cautious optimism that local banks could weather the financial crisis.

In a speech before the Chamber of Thrift Banks governing BSP Officer in Charge Nestor Espenilla Jr. said Philippine banks' exposure to structured products of all kinds was only around 2 percent of their total assets. This suggested that total exposure to such instruments amounted to about P100 billion out of the banking system's P5 trillion in total assets.

The International Monetary Fund, at the closing of the annual meetings with the World Bank in Washington DC, said contributed global action was starting to reverse the size of the financial crisis, but urged financial leaders to "deploy all instruments" to limit damage to the real economy.

Espenilla cited the IMF's estimate that only half of the $1.4-trillion U.S.-issued senior loans from the crisis that originated in the United States had been provided for so far.

"So it seems this crisis may be far from over even as more decisive and coordinated steps are already being taken to resolve it," he said.

But he added that recently announced plans by the US and European governments to recapitalize ailing institutions had been well-received by financial markets.

"Some of the tension has started to ease. The Philippines has benefited from improved sentiment as seen from the rebound in both the PSE [Philippine Stock Exchange] and the peso," Espenilla said.

The peso yesterday surged to 46.56 before closing at 47.34 from Monday's finish of 47.26 against the greenback.

"There is reason to believe the worst of the global financial crisis is ... behind us," he said. "The bigger challenge now is to manage the economic fallout that inevitably ensues from recessionary tendencies in the world's major economies. This may lead to a slowdown in our own economy."

Amid all these uncertainties, Espenilla said the Philippines and many countries around the region had so far been resilient—a result of the hard lessons learned from the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

Any financial crisis such as the current one, Espenilla said, serves as a reminder of the value of sound regulation and supervision.

"Strong risks remain and we must continue to be vigilant of the unfolding events in the global financial markets," he said. "Ultimately, we are not totally insulated. But we hope to weather this crisis well enough so that setbacks in our economy will be as minimal as possible."

With more corn fields, higher yield seen in '08

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULture has expanded areas planted to corn by another 75,000 hectares in Mindanao to further boost production of the grain by as much as 270,000 metric tons this year.

Agriculture Assistant Secretary Dennis Araullo said that the Diversifying Hinggaranag Asi Corn program will spend P203.6 million for this "crash program" aimed at increasing yellow corn output to meet production targets.

"The planting season for this expansion areas covers the second and third quarters [of 2008]," Araullo said. "Hence, we can expect to harvest an estimated 270,000 MT in the last two quarters of the year."

In the second half of 2008, the government expects bank corn production—which is currently planted to some 1.4 million hectares of land—to reach as much as 4.1 million MT.

But worse outcomes from the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics showed that corn output during the period may only reach 3.71 million MT, or equivalent to a 6.79-percent drop from last year's volume. The BAS report indicated a 270,000-MT decline from last year's second half output, which had reached 3.98 million MT.

According to Araullo, about 30,000 hectares of the expansion areas are located in Bukidnon, 28,700 hectares in Lanao, and 9,300 hectares in Maguindanao.

With the corn crash program in place, the government had again revised its full year corn output target to 7.2 million MT, or slightly lower than its original target of 7.4 million MT. The DA is confident of meeting this growth target despite the damages wrought by typhoons and the negative impact of high fertilizer prices on farm production.

To secure this year's corn output target, the DA will promote the use of organic and microbial fertilizers to enable corn farmers to slash fertilizer expenses by as much as 40 percent, facilitate the creation of additional corn areas, and hasten the construction of 45 additional post-harvest processing and trading centers as necessary.

Further, the DA said the Philippines would become self-sufficient in corn by 2010.

MOTORING

John Cesar D. Mangosing

2 centenarians brace for tougher times ahead

By Charles E. Bohan

IT'S INTERESTING TO note that last Oct. 1 marked not only the end of the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan (Eid al-Fitr) but also the date when the Model T first rolled out of Detroit 100 years ago.

The Model T is, of course, the first low-priced, mass-produced car built by American Henry Ford, the founder of the Ford Motor Co.

While cars were already in existence during Ford's time, they were way too expensive for the ordinary folks and most of them were custom-made for their owners.

With the Model T, Ford was able to deliver his promise of building "a motor car for the great multitude."

Moving belts

How did Ford do it? By inventing a moving industrial production line that features moving belts in his factory. His employees were able to build cars one piece at a time, instead of one car at a time.

Aside from laying the blueprint for the modern mass automobile production, Ford also introduced standardized interchangeable parts, thus making it cheaper to own a Model T than to own a horse or a carriage.

By 1921, the Model T accounted for 57 percent of the world's automotive production.

The Model T was so successful that by the time Ford stopped making the automobile some 15 million had been sold, making Ford Motor the leading auto manufacturer in the country at the time.

Another American

Interestingly, Ford was not the only American making headway in the US automotive market.

While Ford gets credit for standardizing assembly line production of automobiles, General Motors founder William Durant is regarded mainly for empowering the market, that is, giving them a variety of brands, models, colors as well as prices to choose from.

With their industry innovations, the two visionaries were able to transform their respective company into among the world's biggest automotive powerhouses.

Most importantly Ford and GM formed the United States into a nation of motorists.

But things are not always rosy for the two American car giants.

Both suffered heavily from the double whammy of high fuel prices and the global financial crisis.

(CONTINUED ON B3)

Saving the manual gearbox

MY CRAFT

André Pabico

IT ASTONISHES ME TO NO END WHEN people are intimidated by the simple clutch pedal. In years as a driving instructor for both corporate and media events, this general phobia for the third pedal seems to have only grown demonstrably.

At the last performance driving clinic, easily 50 percent of all the first-time students expressed some sort of grief at having to take a manual transmission out into a short and light gymkhana track. All one can really do in those short sessions is attempt to make students comfortable with having to do the gear selection themselves.

One cannot really blame people for not wanting to drive a stick shift. Nine-to-nine percent of the driving that most of us do is boring, commuter-to-client- related. To make matters more complicated, those tasks also need to be executed in a driving environment toxic with choking traffic and irresponsible motorists.

Concentrate on the road

One really needs all his/her wits about them, even just for a quick hop to the corner convenience store. The fewer things that drivers have to worry about in the operation of their vehicles, the more that they can concentrate on the road ahead and the plagues of danger that lurk just outside of their peripheral vision.

Case closed then. Let us as a driving society declare the obsolescence of the manual gearbox and send it on its way into the automotive history books. Add the elevation-rear windows afforded by not having to worry about engine revs, jump starts and stalling at cross and the ergonomic ill all look fails. Another automated system busts the one with the human being in the loop and the fault is solely ours.

No arguments

The trouble is that we cannot be bothered to worry about small transmission things anymore. Because our ordinary things are handed over to digital and mechanical enslavement, we as humans to concentrate on more important things. We are then supposedly free because of all of this. The automatic transmission makes life simpler, easier and less stressful. No arguments there but we also become less skilled (more) because of it.

It is not by the mere operations of another pedal and a gear change lever that makes us better at driving. By foregoing the computer that thinks for every modern automatic gearbox, drivers will need to understand a little bit more about their cars. It is in learning what the engine and gears are saying at any one time and how to properly respond to them with that we become better behind the wheel. And that is only the beginning.

Solid base

The foundation laid by figuring out the nuances of a single manual gearbox is the solid base for any advanced driving. Jumping from one manual vehicle to another teaches you about the subtle nuances of different engines and ultimately the marked changes that come from one unique vehicle to another.

Comparing an automatic version to a manual of the same model often exposes filtered strengths and weaknesses in design or performance. In not so many words, mastering the manual transmission will expand your ability to know and understand the fascinating world of the automobile better.

In the next time you get a chance to drive a stick shift, my advice is to go out and grab the opportunity whatever the vehicle. Then, there will be that moment where you will wonder if the church will catch or the engine will stall. There will be a need to figure out how to manage the pedals and yields to torque and power... per gear.

You'll have to get used to listening the gas and clutch for banging on an incline. All this extra effort is well worth it, believe me. The knitting curve gets gentler from here on. Besides, few things worth doing are ever easy; nothing essential ever comes automatic.

Motorcycle safety in ICW '08 forum

THE RISING NUMBER OF motorcycle accidents in the country will be one of the topics in the two-day forum that marks this year's Nestlé Initiative Commissioners Meet (ICW '08).

According to Art Reyes, president of Philippine Investors Club, the organizers of ICW '08, the alarming increase in motorcycle accidents must be examined in detail to find out what the government and private sector could do to mitigate the problem.

Motorcycle accidents

"Every day we hear of motorcycle accidents and in many cases the victims are either killed or permanently disabled. We cannot just sit and watch this carnage on our roads," he said.

Reyes, from the media, the academe, the motorcycle industry and the insurance sector will have their presentation during the forum on Oct. 17, 22 at the conference hall of the Insurance Institute for Asia and the Pacific in Makati City.

Before the forum on motorcycle safety, insurers will discuss natural calamities such as earthquakes and typhoons and how Filipinos can prepare for the worst. An expert in fire safety will also be presenting.

Awareness

The ICW '08 seeks to increase the awareness of common Filipinos on the importance of motorcycle insurance. It is being sponsored by the Philippine Insurers and Reinsurers Association, the umbrella organization of all non-life insurance companies in the country.

Reyes said that unlike life insurance, which you buy for your loved ones in case of your untimely demise, non-life insurance is something you buy for yourself—for the things you cannot afford to lose.

"You buy nonlife insurance for your house, your car, your business, even your health," he said. "If you think hard about it, nonlife insurance enables you to live your life to the fullest because it makes sure that your most valuable possessions are protected."

The ICW '08 will also have an exhibit titled "Insured Ka Ba?" at the theater lobby of the Trinoma Mall from Oct. 23 to 25.

The ICW '08 will end with a bus tour at The Fort on Oct. 26 where more than 3,000 runners are expected.

Nissan's 'Asenso Negosyo' at SM Megatrade Hall

FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN BE YOUR OWN boss in the booming transportation and automotive industry in the Asenso Negosyo Academy Series of the 7th Fil-Negosyo Expo on Oct. 19 at the SM Megamall Megatrade Hall.

Universal Motors Corp., leading distributor of Nissan vehicles in the Philippines, will be conducting lectures on starting a transport business, finance and accounting as well as sales and marketing.

The Urvan, Nissan's multi-purpose vehicle, is a favorite model because of its versatility as a school van, shuttle service and utility vehicle. With low downpayments and flexible installment plans, Nissan's "If Mo, It's Business" program has been a very attractive concept even for first-time entrepreneurs.

UMC executive Edward Cruz Asenso Negosyo Academy several years ago to offer free seminars for prospective buyers of Nissan utility vehicles, the first of its kind in the auto industry.

NISSAN Urvan

Regular component

The Asenso Negosyo is a regular component of Fil Negosyo Expo, a seminar-type event of SM Megamalls Hall which features free lectures on starting your own enterprise to the transport business and allied services such as accountancy, car insurance, security cameras, surveillance, car gadgets and auto services.

There will be free product presentations from Philtech, Secured Capital, and direct shopping business from Rapchan.

With the theme "Convergence for Global Competitiveness: Solving Negosyoneering Global Pinoy," the expo gathers small and medium enterprises (SMEs) engaged in franchising, dealership, direct selling, entrepreneurship, logistics, food and beverage, health and beauty, technology, service sector and other emerging enterprises.

Free seminars

Fil-Negosyo Expo offers free seminars from the country's most sought-after business experts to create employment and help fight poverty.

Other activities in the awarding activity are the Filipino Excellence Series spearheaded by Developing Resource for Entrepreneurs Advancement and Mobilization on Oct. 14; the Youth Entrepreneurs Congress-Creative Marketing Leadership Series on Oct. 15 and the Women Entrepreneurs Congress on Oct. 16 featuring seminars designed to harness the potentials of youth and women.

There will also be lectures by the Association of Marketing Educators on Oct. 17, and the Business Capital Management and Growing Series on Oct. 18.

For details, call Megatrade Hall at 633.1687, 634.7837 or Tin Link at 643.3887, 643-7760, or e-mail megatrade@asenso-pinoydlc.com or events_mkt@yahoo.com.

2 centenarians brace for tougher times ahead

FORD'S Model T: The car that started it all

From page B6-1

1930s as well as episodic labor strikes.

Based with a continuing rise in the price of fuel and growing unemployment, the Americans—their most important market for decades—have suddenly changed in the types of vehicles they are purchasing, slowly turning away from the two car giants' core truck and sport utility vehicle lineup.

Their stock shudders in the market, sensing this change in the automotive market preference, were able to prepare themselves, expanded their vehicle lineup to include smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicle models.

Some companies, such as Toyota, even resorted heavily to "hybrid" technology where a small gasoline or diesel engine acts in tandem with an electric powerplant, supplementing and recharging the batteries as needed.

More daunting

Now, as Ford and GM look to their next 100 years, they now face a different and more daunting challenge.

Where before they only have to develop automobiles according to their market's demands of style, speed, luxury and status, this time Ford and GM have to address new concerns like global warming, air pollution and scarcity of oil-based resources.

Because of the massively restricting credit crisis in the United States, the two car giants are also finding an resulting consumers' overdrawn and the inability of their car buyers to finance vehicles they just bought.

Both Ford and GM look to electric car to spark revival.

Ford recently got a $10 million grant from the US Department of Energy, which it will use for research, development and demonstration of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

This plug-in version of the Ford Escape Hybrid the company is refining will be equipped with a 10 kWh advanced lithium-ion battery that stores enough energy to drive up to 40 km at top speeds of 64 kilometer per hour.

Another rather bond, GM is set to deliver the Chevy Volt by 2010.

The Volt is designed to run 96 km (the average commuter) on a single charge and then fires a gasoline engine kick in to generate additional electricity. As such it differs from gas-electric hybrids like the Toyota Prius, which combine electric and gas engines.

As an extended-range electric vehicle, the Volt is engineered to accelerate from zero to 100 kph in around 8 seconds, and have a top speed of at least 161 kph.

Will Ford's and GM's breakthrough electric cars be their deliverance?

Only time can tell.

SUVs sales overcome fuel cost spike

SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES BECAME POPular in the early '90s as a status symbol. Since then there were a lot of SUVs introduced in the market fitting every budget, demographics and lifestyle. As recent shows, journalists, executives and car enthusiasts spend most of their time in throngs around the many SUVs on display. Almost everyone dreams of owning an SUV as it gives prestige and a statement of lifestyle and fulfillment.

However when fuel prices peaked during the start of the third quarter this year, vehicle sales in most markets particularly in the United States dropped significantly, to which SUV sales was primarily affected as people switched from gas guzzler SUVs to more fuel-efficient vehicles and hybrids.

In contrast, reading fuel cost did not put the brakes on increasing SUV sales in the Philippines. September year-to-date figures from the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (CAMPI) Manufacturers Association show that total SUVs sold amounted for 56,681 units. Purchasers, compact and midsize SUVs continue to dominate sales with 81 percent against large-size SUVs.

Still relevant

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines' Froilan Dytianquin, assistant vice president for Marketing Services, commented that "I believe that SUVs in our market remain to be relevant unlike in the United States where most of the SUVs available locally are powered by fuel-efficient gasoline and diesel engines. In addition, SUVs in our market continue to be practical given its higher stance which enables it to easily maneuver bad roads and also pass through flooded roads during the rainy season."

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines continues to achieve excellent sales in SUV. In September, MMPC has remarkably sold a total of 479 units of Mitsubishi Outlander and Montero Sport putting it at the top of the compact and midsize SUV segment. It continues to excite the market with its SUV lineup that truly exudes class, sportiness and power. The Mitsubishi Outlander, Endeavour, Zigzoo and the recently launched Montero Sport continues to boost sales growth.

A lot of praises

The Mitsubishi Outlander, a crossover SUV receives a lot of praises in reviews for its energetic V6 and 4 by-four MIvec engine as well as its very youthful design. And Mitsubishi Motors' Mitsubishi Motors has set this SUV apart from its competitors with distinctive styling and sporty character.

Though very fresh in the market, the Montero Sport instantly became the most desired midsize SUV in the market today. The Montero Sport sports unique contemporary styling and features uncompromised performance with its 3.2 Diesel Injection-Diesel common rail intercooled turbocharged engine matched to Mitsubishi's renowned Super Select four-wheel drive system. In addition, Montero Sport customers have also experienced adventure on the luxurious interior and roominess and more importantly its excellent riding comfort.

Low downpayment promo

Meanwhile, Mitsubishi Motors Philippines announces its "Mobilizing Gone" financing promo for the Pasa Casino, a more reliable, safe and easy-to-maintain truck. The promo offers buyers with easy-to-use low downpayment plans for Casino FS2DY 4-wheeler and FS2DS 6-wheeler.

The downpayment is at an amazingly low P156,000 for the FS2DY and P172,000 for FS2DS. This promo also gives financing buyers added values like a free 3-year LTO registration and 1 unit, free comprehensive insurance for the unit and chassis.

Visit your nearest Mitsubishi Motors dealer and avail of this promo which is only up to Oct. 31.

Mazda introduces 'Zoom-Zoom' pickup

ARE YOU THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO epitomizes mobility—one who drives around the city or countryside for your business every day of the week and treasures the winding roads on weekends to get to your favorite leisure destination? Do you enjoy driving a car that combines sporty handling, solid performance and sophisticated looks?

Do you spend much time indulging in the fun and action lifestyle with friends? Do business meetings and morning errands form part of your weekdays? Say yes and Mazda's got the vehicle that's both practical and suited for you.

Newest entrant

Mazda Philippines will be launching its newest entrant to the market—the new Mazda BT-50—a vehicle that's a perfect fit for those who lead an independent and active lifestyle. The new Mazda BT-50 is the pickup that's designed for work, leisure and outdoor activities. Mazda engineers have built in the features. Come spirit into the new Mazda BT-50, balancing sporty styling with masculine ruggedness.

Since it was launched in the global market, the new Mazda BT-50 has been reaping numerous awards and recognition, namely: Car of the Year 2008, Best 2,500 cc Raised Pickup Truck and the Best Car Award for the Turn/Wheel both given by the Council Prix International Group in Thailand, Car of the Year Award given by the Australian 4WD Monthly Magazine, the Off-road Car of the Year for 2007 in Russia, the Ute of the Year 2007 given by the Driver Magazine in New Zealand. The new Mazda BT-50 has over 118,000 pickups sold in Europe and well over 1,000,000 worldwide.

Sporty and stylish

Capable and rough yet sporty and stylish—these are the words to describe the new of this new pickup soon to be unveiled to the public. Styled with rounded accessories and featuring a style that makes you think you're riding in a sedan, the Mazda BT-50 delivers outstanding handling, ride, load capacity and safety in any driving condition.

Watch out for the new Mazda BT-50. It will soon be available for viewing at the showrooms of Mazda dealers: Mazda Greenhills, Mazda Makati, Mazda Quezon Avenue, Mazda Pampanga, newly opened Mazda Batangas and Mazda Cebu. Mazda's first dealership outside of Luzon. You can visit or schedule a test drive of the all-new Mazda BT-50 by calling the Mazda hotline at 85-MAZDA (85-629232) or by request-ing online at www.mazda.com.ph.

Subaru Kansha festival set Oct. 17-19

MOTOR IMAGE PHILIPPINES, THE EXCLUsive distributor of Subaru vehicles in the Philippines, will hold its first Kansha festival from Oct. 17 to 19 at the Subaru Greenhills showroom. Also known as Subaru customer appreciation weekend, the Kansha festival is a Japanese-inspired event dedicated to offering Subaru customers special service discounts, promos and attractions to express Motor Image's appreciation to all its customers who have made Subaru the premier sports luxury brand in the market today.

The Kansha festival is originally a celebration adapted from the Japanese Kinro Kansha on 15 or Labor Thanksgiving Day. Motor Image will be using the same theme in expressing its appreciation to all Subaru customers. It will also be flying in from Singapore and Japan Subaru master technicians to personally inspect and repair all vehicles coming for maintenance this weekend. And as an added twist of fun, the popular Subaru girls and Motor Image staff will be wearing the traditional kimono and yukata while serenading to customers all throughout the day.

The Kansha festival will treat all visitors with special discounts on selected Subaru parts and accessories ranging from 15 up to 50 percent off on regular prices. Subaru World Rally Championship merchandise and collectibles will also be on special sale with up to 20 percent discount offered on all items. Free 10-point vehicle checkups and car washes will also be available throughout the weekend. Motor Image's Subaru experts will also conduct maintenance seminars for all customers they could learn different techniques on how to properly maintain their vehicles.

New car buyers will also be treated to fabulous All-Wheeling Deals promo. Special financing packages such as low monthly amortizations and low downpayment plans will be offered to all buyers. Cash buyers, on the other hand, will be amazed with the special discounts that will be available, especially for the Kansha festival only. Test drives on all Subaru models will also be available throughout the weekend.

The three-day Kansha festival will also be highlighted with other different attractions for the family to enjoy. All kids under 12 years old are invited to join the Japanese-themed contest party on Saturday where special prizes will be given to the winners. There will also be magic and balloon sculpting shows for everyone on Sunday afternoon.

The Subaru showroom will be transformed into a theme park with racing arcades, auto soul combo corners, face painting and henna-tattooing booths, and tea party lounge in the showroom. A Kodak printing booth will be available for any customer who would want to have a souvenir picture during the Kansha festival.

All Subaru owners, fanatics and aspiring customers are invited to visit the Subaru Greenhills showroom this weekend. For service appointments and more details, interested parties may call 727-XXXX or log on to www.motorimage.net.

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Fast Lane to the Grand Prix

Yokohama breakthrough tyres and accompanied exercises in Macau this November. Yokohama, the official tire supplier for the 55th Macau Grand Prix, is giving away an all-expenses paid trip to witness the action-fil.

Grand prize includes roundtrip air fare to Macau, hotel accommodations with breakfast.

Yokohama. Time to power your life. Time to drive you to Macau.

November 13-16, 2008 and still savour its the biggest motoring event in the east.

We're also giving away Advan tiremugs, race wrist bands and cam patches as consolation prizes.

Global financial. . .

From page B1-1

profit for the fiscal year ending March 2008; cut its 2009 global sales target to 4.8M unit from vehicles from 6.1M vehicles.

The crisis has not spared the premium automakers that historically have felt less impact from economic downturn than high-volume carmakers because of their affluent customers. Sales of the ever BMW brand fell 16 percent in September although sales of the Mini increased 12 percent from January to September. Daimler's Mercedes-Benz sales dipped 2 percent in September. Daimler plans a 65,000-vehicle production cut, but a German car magazine said it may reach 80,000. Volvo announced it will lay off an additional 5,200 employees, bringing total layoffs to about 6,000 worldwide, and also cut a shift or one of its plants this month in Sweden and Belgium.

Given these dim statistics, the head of auto forecasting for J.D. Power warned last Thursday that while the global auto industry is experiencing a downturn in 2008, the global market in 2009 was experience a collapse. Analysts worry about the liquidity of GM and Ford, whether they can finance operations through 2009 while their revenues dive and they continue to eat into cash reserves.

But crowding oil prices and a $25 billion low-interest federal loan have given hope to some manufacturers, who are betting on Asia's Big Three as they scramble to revamp their plants and speed up the development of small, fuel-efficient vehicles. Thus said, 2009 still looks bleak for the global auto industry and it's anybody guess when and how the Philippines' little corner of it will be affected. (With reports from dispatches, AFP and AFP)

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Don't believe everything you think.

PINOY Rider e-Extreme

Get yourself in the loop and know what motorcycle riders are talking about in the latest issue of **Pinoy Rider Extreme** magazine.

SEE HOW motorcycles have overtaken the street scene in Handlebar Heaven as told by our Editor-in-Chief Adel Gabot. Be a smart motorist and know the benefits of motorcycle riding versus commuting. Be on the fast track as Pinoy Rider Extreme takes you to the Cray Make Race Tagaytayan and Moto Grand Prix. Everyone is going green, and so are the Honda motorcycles. Learn how Honda's Euro 3-compliant motorcycles protect the environment in style. Pinoy Rider Extreme also brings you talented actor Dominic Ochoa as he takes on another role as a road safety advocate. Pinoy Rider Extreme magazine is published quarterly by Hinga Inquirer Publications.

For inquiries and announcements, call 759-2024 or 759-2023 or email us at *pinoyrider@gmail.com*.

Global financial crisis threatens auto industry

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

DURING THESE DAYS OF COLLAPSING banks and crashing stock markets, be thankful for good news no matter how few and far between. Last week, the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. and the Truck Manufacturers Association announced that car and truck sales went up by 12 percent to 66,131 units in the first nine months of the year. Caucpi president Elizabeth H. Lee expressed confidence that the auto industry will reach the 125,000 unit forecast for 2008, bucking faltering sales in other markets abroad.

Note, however, that the 12 percent or-pottot increase covered January-September 2008. No details were given on how many units were sold in September, when most bank failures on Wall Street and the US$700 billion bailout plan made banner headlines worldwide, scaring consumers away from showrooms and car loans. Now, everyone waits apprehensively for the October 2008 sales report, after banks will have tightened credit amid the worst financial crisis in 80 years and panic selling to mark markets everywhere.

Cost

In the final week of September alone in the United States, analysts estimated that the crisis cost the auto industry as many as 300,000 vehicle sales. Overall US sales last month plunged to 963,000 vehicles from 1.21 million in September 2007. It was the lowest in 15 years and analysts predicted that it would be even worse this October. The forecast for US sales for the entire year is 15.6 million, down from the 16 million total last year and the lowest in more than a decade.

For Toyota Motor Corp., the year-to-year sales drop was the worst it had experienced in the United States in 28 years. Last month, Toyota sales slid 32.3 percent, Honda 24 percent, Ford Motor 34.4 percent, Chrysler 32.8 percent and General Motors 33.8 percent (due to employee-discount deals offered to all buyers and increased sales to retool an Ilumi). Nissan Motor Co. posted a 43 percent drop in net profit for its fiscal first quarter and expects a 30 percent decline in full-year net profit.

Billions

The sales slump comes at the worst possible time for GM, Ford and Chrysler as they burn billions of dollars in cash monthly to fund new products. GM lost $15.5 billion in its second quarter, Ford lost $7.6 billion while Chrysler lost $400 million even from the Big Three's production cuts, cost-cutting measures and shipments of tens of thousands of jobs.

The fallout from Wall Street's turmoil has spilled over to Europe, Japan, China and India, the major auto markets outside North America. J.D. Power's numbers, the auto research firm, forecasts sales in Europe to decline 3 percent this year compared to 2007 while sales to China, the world's second largest car market, will increase only 9.7 percent this year, less than half the 24.1 percent growth rate in 2007. India's sales will grow 5.1 percent, the slow, such lowest than the 16 percent increase in 2007.

Slashed

As a result of the worldwide downturn, Toyota, which was poised to overtake GM in sales volume, has slashed its global sales target for 2009 to 9.7 million cars and trucks from the original 10.4 million. Honda Motor Co., hoping for an 18 percent drop in net

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LIFESTYLE Home & Entertaining

Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan
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Foliage and artworks make Jardin de Miramar the perfect setting for 'telenovelas'—and private parties

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This garden is like no other

By Margo C. Enriquez
Contributor

THE NEED TO MAINTAIN A three-hectare property in Antipolo, coupled with a love for the arts, prompted Edna del Rosario to develop Jardin de Miramar, a venue for outdoor special events.

Formerly known as Villa Leona, the property was a weekend getaway for Del Rosario's family and an oasis to entertain friends. To keep the place alive all year round, she turned it into a destination of sorts.

Jardin de Miramar has served as location for a telenovela, a movie, garden weddings, debuts and children's parties.

The broad expanse of greenery, dotted with fruit trees shooting up to the sky and natural woodlawn, is accentuated with contemporary artworks.

The feeling of being far removed from the madness of the city starts in the winding driveway leading to a veranda, studded with towering mango trees and pagodi lawn, and edged with shellstudded stone with patterned leaves to break the monotony of grass.

Sudden forms, resembling banana leaves, create large mess all over. Huge form grass in clusters on the pagodi lawn are beauties. Like many tropical gardens, green is the crowning color, starting with ribbon and cautious grasses that glow like unpolished emerald.

Growing trees—palm trees, bamboos, pagodi lawn, mango and other fruit bearing trees—is Jardin's other indulgence. They not only give shade, their majestic trunks and sprawling branches also provide contrast to the green of the landscape.

Clusters of yellow poinsettia, bougainvillea, fuchsias, yellowish camarines, mother-in-law tongues and a grouping of bamboo orchids, Jardin's flagships and flamingos relieve the overdose of copious monochromatic green seconds.

Instinct

Other touches of color are the larger-than-seen and lavenders to little pots, pink flowering vines, creeping bougainvillea vines, plectranthus intertwining with silver vines, orange cosmos, yellow irises that cover the trees and ground orchids.

Pink and white Dolor Asiatic waterlilies

TURN TO

STIFF spike bromeliads contrast the rounder lilies and other plants.

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JORGE Joseph of Vice Productions and Pedro Cadenas

ROCHE Tagasaki and Philip Palma

VICE Quinsaat Mark Lardizo

PACE D'Pandacan, Dennis Scott and Karl Fowle

Celeb's jealous wife smashes his Lacoste watch with hammer

JANNA Suarez, Gino Dizon, Martin Lagos and Norman Liwan

DRIVEN IS ALL ABOUT PASSION... The little things in life that make a difference. It is all about the love of music and the overwhelming feeling you get immersing yourself in it." With this intro, our King of the Day (not dynasty of Warehouse 135) Daniel Primero, soon dated a power cut of life like Miss Real-time of Beauty, David Jacob of Eye Club Hong Kong, Manolet "Papi" Santos of Twitch and Mond Ortiz of Forum Authority. The event lasted till very, very late Cinderella's bedtime, darlings.

The Driven team had the whole house making during the hard-to-host bash for Sonia's attended by host DJs, producers, promoters and hard-core clubbers, paleygays.

Sis, who rocked the dance floor? Jap Sarmet of Cagayan, as seen once in Makati Avenue; Chino Nolo and Warren Habalayan of Music-Lokal.com; Maree Zamora with his drop-dead gorgeous Brazilian models; Warehouse 135 partners JP and Hilary Bautista-Bautista; Nikki Romero and most of all resource Leslie Kuse; and networker-mom, Dominic's late, eye-catching wife and Warehouse first lady, beauty queen Jess Primero, the perfect hostess, darlings.

Who else was there? There was this namedrop-generodere who practically begged the doorman to let him in because of the free drinks. He was refused every step. But the funniest episode was from this gorgeous model who told me in a shared manner, "I know I'm so drunk, Maurice, and I'm feeling so sophisticated and can't even pronounce it. Ha! Ha!" I told the waitress, "Bitch coffee for her, honey."

Other GCD TV Star Makers, Diagno Musicians, Period Wizard, Jagerinfinite, Jack Daniels and Wilsmith's Records were the perfect sponsors.

It was a fun night, paleygays, only at Warehouse 135, ouch!

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using YKL Photo Solutions

Lacoste's perfect timing

Ayala 75 successful years, darlings, an exciting mix this Lacoste collection has in store!

Known for its tennis shirts, Lacoste held a press celebrity Manila International Open Tennis Tournament at Power Plant Mall in Rockwell. Tons of interest from sports and entertainment like Stephen Tobiaslon, John Bratis, ESPN-Star Sports commentator Anthony Suntay and Jazz Sumaporan, managing editor of Metro Magazine, came to the affair. The champions were Jay Benedicto and Manny de los Reyes, editor in chief of Speed Magazine, paleygays.

One guest told me, "I bought my wife Lacoste's Classic Twist watch. And that was not enough, she went out the next day and bought the Pop Time design using my card. Three days later, she saw a girl's number in my cell phone which I forgot to bring in the office. You know what she did, Maurice?" "No," I answered. "She got one of my expensive watches and smashed it with a hammer." "Uh, wow!" I answered. Moral of the story is you guys should keep your liaison number in the cell phone and leave it in the office, lol hehe!).

Next was the beauty fashion show showing the latest impressive compositions from the Lacoste Brand Watch 2008 Collection, as well as the cute exclusive limited-edition Lacoste 75th anniversary watch that comes in a black steel design. The popular Lacoste Group, exclusive distributor of Lacoste watches, has only 50 luxurious and elegant timepieces available in the country, paleygays.

"We are proud to unveil this latest collection here in Manila. This collection combines sophistication, elegance and functionality, living up to what the brand creates," Esther Teh, general manager of Mercado Group for Asia Pacific, proudly boasted, darlings.

Nevertheless, we couldn't get our eyes off the other eye-catching Lacoste Basel Watch 2008 Collection, which has gorgeous colors of the sun and sea and nautical designs titled as Harbor, Anchor, Seaport, Glass Twist, Swing, Advantage and Pop Time.

Check it out, darlings, I'm sure you'll find one that will suit your lifestyle.

Exclusively distributed by the Lacoste Group and available in all 3 Timezone stores and Lacoste boutiques nationwide.

'Beloved' fundraiser

Cosmo Alemilla's leading philanthropist and patronesses of the arts Imelda Cojuangco is lead organizer of the "Beloved fundraiser" concert on Dec. 17.

It is a fundraising dinner to benefit the Gift of Life Foundation and Philippines Heart Center.

Behind the scenes are other leading philanthropists, such as PLDT chairman Manny Pangilinan, and "Beloved" project management committee members Marlene Santos, Jaime Elizalde and Dinda Garcia Velasco.

Be mesmerized by the fantastic music and internationally acclaimed performances of the Metropolitan Opera of New York, Martin Stevens and Louie Ocampo at Makati Shangri-La Manila.

Contact Chevy Salvador at 0908-3268408 or belovedconcert@gmail.com for more info.

Ballet Philippines' 'New Beginnings'

Ballet Philippines' 2008-2009 fundraiser and grandest event is the "New Beginnings" gala, to be chaired by Sofia Elizalde along with honorary gala chairperson Elizabeth Sharon. This chic and elegant black-tie event will be held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines tomorrow, Oct. 16. Be there for this super happening, paleygays. I know I will.

HEADING DIKING "Beloved Encore" chair Imelda Cojuangco and project management committee member Marlene Santos

HOT celebrity Dingdong Dantes with Lacoste jewelers president Emerson Tan

CHAMPIONS Jon Benedicto and Speed magazine editor in chief Manny de los Reyes

COMPOSER Louie Ocampo

PIANIST Bruce Scanna

CLOCKWISE from top left, tenor Victor Robinson, soprano Lee Woods Friedman, mezzo-soprano Fenise Lamb and baritone Ryan Taylor

LACOSTE marketing manager Cecil Yao and Lacoste GM Esther Teh, both of the Mercado Group, with Cathy Perlas, brand manager of Lacoste watches at the Lacoste Group

GORGEOUS Models Ari Ko

"BELOVED Encore" project management committee member Dinda Garcia Velasco and featured performer Martin Stevens

WITH large leaves, Jardin incorporates a vast range of foliage and flowers from bromeliads, ti plants, skin plants, wild sampaguitas that frame the outdoor living area.

ECHINODORUS border the waterfalls.

WATER refreshes the lilies and the bromeliads and streams that fringe the basin.

This garden is like no other

From page C1

the fence, dressed with palm trees. Zamias and caudiexps or yellow trees cover the old area.

As in most Filipino gardens, don't ask the gardener how plants are arranged. Plantings are done as if by instinct... the symmetrians by the coral tree and palmeras or pothos growing alongside feather palms.

By the waterfall, scented bushes of the diamin old disc give a sweet and subtle scent. Little groupings of water lilies, money tree, water lettuces, bromeliads, star jasmines dangling from the phoenix palms permeate the area as well.

Each spot has its unique character. In the driveway, metal sculptures of children by Michael Garcia underneath the mango trees provide an exuberant touch. Nandino, a multi-level garden designed by artist Tony Lanuza, evokes a tropical scene with royal palms framed with elephant's ear plants and a soothing waterfall.

Regalo has a vine-covered gazebo as the focal point, surrounded by water features with bromeliads, ti plants, heliconia, shapis and cordyceps, a kind of ginger plant with spirally arranged leaves. The Terrazas is a three-level terrace shrouded by giant branches of a mango tree.

The Cubos, with its stainless theme, has shapis and rumbergia vines wrapping around salvaged parts from old ships. Its center of attraction is Noah's Ark, a 50-year-old boat, renovated by sculptor Ed Castrillo, and dramatically lit by Shelko Illuminotec. Shapis and rumbergias emphasize the distressed surface of old ships.

Ed Castrillo's fish sculpture makes a dramatic statement.

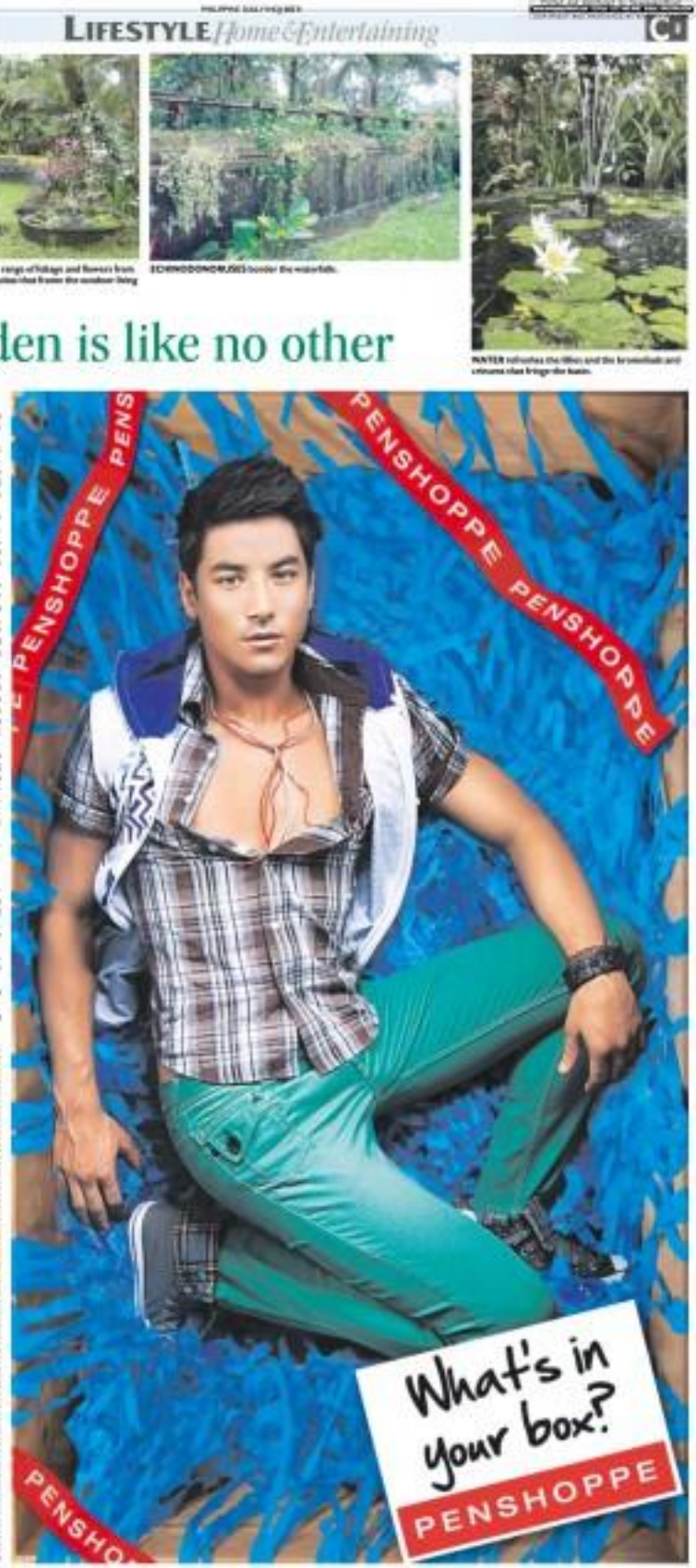
Romantic

The tantamount venue is the most romantic. Tumbergias and millionaire's vines drape the moss-covered adobe walls and arches, over a pond filled with healthy koi. Ginger and lilacs and flowers from the bougainvillea evoking a nostalgic past.

It complements the pavilion called Serdan, which has tropical foliage motifs to show the link between the outdoors and indoors.

Flower mosaics by Alfred Cabrera, members

THE DI



ART is integral to the landscape. Mosaic pieces are done by artist Tok Teja in collaboration with Hannah Lamgunen.

This garden is like no other

From page G1

displaying pocket gardens and large lead-printed lighting fixtures by architect Felicity Bugarin herds up the other walls.

The native theme Thing-Thing showcases an outdoor setting of bamboo and wood walk facing the untainted topcover of Mounser's frames. Sunglossy orchids dangle from the surrounding mango trees. Traveler's palms are highlighted by pink gingers and pothos plant.

The hideaway of the pageol towns, it plants, shapes and living watches the facade of Casa Santa, home to a collection of over 2,000 Santa Claus icons. Sculptor Daniel dela Cruz is working on a mural sculpture of larger-than-life-size brides, while environmental artist Jinggle Nono is completing a cube fountain.

Clearly on top of the romanticismed artworks, Jardin de Mounser is also a work of art, conceived by nature itself.

Jardin de Mounser is at 276, 279 San Jose Extension, Antipolo. Call 8371583, 0917-7019915 or 0922-8023917. E-mail Mounser@globelines.com.ph or visit www.mounser.com.ph

TUMBAGAN. Land millionaires dress up the natural walls on the stone-covered arches.

THE CONSUMER
Linda B. Bolido

ATMs continue to baffle, exasperate bank clients

IT SEEMS THE SAGA of MAN VERSUS machine (the automated teller machine, that is, or ATM) continues and probably will never end as convenience makes it necessary for both bank and clients to let these semi-robots handle transactions.

A reader from Iloilo City, after seeing an item in this column several weeks back, recalled an incident she saw an unidentified guy try to. She said the guy ahead of her in the ATM made a withdrawal then heard him complaining that he got a receipt but no cash.

She stays left after waiting for a while. When she approached the machine, before she could insert her card, money was dispensed, obviously what the guy should have gotten.

Though she tried to find the man, she found it difficult inside a huge mall to track him down. She decided to leave the money with the guard on duty, hoping he would have better luck finding the unlucky ATM user.

Whether or not he got his cash she does not know but the incident also caused her some concerns. She asks, "Will the bank reimburse the money that the man did not get but was dispensed after he left?"

We posed the question to Mike Bercasio, head of the Bank of Philippine Island's Express Teller Department.

Bercasio says the client should have waited a little longer while the machine counts the money. An ATM user will hear the sound of money being counted as the machine processes or releases the bills.

Bercasio says a precautionary measure in the operation of ATMs is, if the customer fails to get the cash within the span of about 20 seconds, the machine "takes back" the money and the amount will be credited back to the customer.

Of course, in this case, the machine also failed to follow the usual routine for a successful withdrawal. The ATM never usually prompts the customer to get card, cash and receipt, in that order. That is why ATM users are littered with small slips of papers because many users do not bother to save for their receipts and the next person just throws them on the floor.

In the case mentioned by the reader, the machine released the card, then the receipt and the money after the customer got tired of waiting.

Knowing that things do not always happen as planned or programmed, Bercasio says "the bank is expediting the installation of sensors in all our ATMs" to preclude any disputes and guide them in reconciling records and settling complaints.

Relieved client

Aida L. Sermonia of Quezon City was also victimized when a swindler milked a glitch. Although she did not get any money because the machine malfunctioned, the amount she was trying to withdraw was deducted from her account.

She wrote to thank BPI Gateway branch manager, who she could only identify as "Miss Melissa," for attending to her problem and assuring her that the necessary adjustments would be made to correct her bank records.

As for reader Alex Cayco, who had a problem with a BDO machine, I have already asked for your complaint to be forwarded to BDO. Hopefully, you will hear from the bank soon, if you have not heard from them yet.

Clarification

Reports on radiation contamination of milk and dairy-based products from China have people confused.

Reader Annie D. Cayco of Manila is among those people who now find it difficult to sort through the many reports, some of them conflicting, on the melamine issue. He needs clarification in particular about a certain chocolate product.

In his e-mail, Cayco said while the Department of Health's Bureau of Food and Drugs (DOH-BFAD) cleared Stuttern Chocolate of Mars Food of contamination, the bureau published a story saying the South Korean food and drug agency came up with different findings.

He wants to know which government agency is telling the truth—Korea's or the Philippines'?

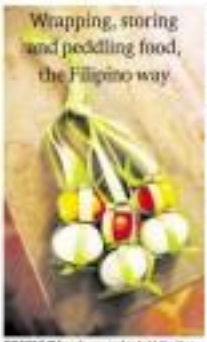
We forwarded Cayco's query to the bureau and got the following response:

"Stated on DOH-BFAD Advisory No. 2008-099 dated 03 October 2008, the Stuttern product that was found negative for melamine was Stuttern Fruit Roasted in Caramel & Soft Nougat in Dark Milk Chocolate. This is one of the samples collected by the local drug regulators of Korea and was forwarded to the laboratory for analysis."

Send letters to The Consumer Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Floor Media Center, Real St., Port Area, Manila, or fax 897-8783 or e-mail feedback@inquirer.com.ph

LIFESTYLE Home&Entertaining

Marilen Espiritu's true-to-form delicious Filipiniana



COCONUT fronds are used to hold the ibog so-called Cebu-ngg and tomato. This is the way farmers carry their lunch of rice wrapped in palm fronds, plus tomatoes and salted eggs.

MARILEN Mahusay Espiritu

By Liz Bernardo

An invitation from Marilen Espiritu to her home is always a wonderful experience. Her home is her sanctuary, a place so serene that it feels as if one is in an exclusive resort in Bali or Fiji.

Her house is like a resort, with the den, cozy room and the main house built like pavilions spread out on the lot.

Over lunch she announced her new project, a book titled "Wrap them, Store them, Peddle Them. "The Filipino Way." It will be launched on Oct. 25. We were treated to a multi-sampling of the book and a scrumptious, mouth-watering lunch.

This is Espiritu's first book project—"A personal account of a quest," she describes it. It focuses on the indigenous Filipino way of wrapping, storing and peddling of food. It tackles the preparation of delicacies we all grew up with—*Pastillas de Leche*, Sandra Salonga's, *Bebanitas*, *Bebanitas* and *Kuseng Puti*.

It includes the origins of these delicacies, and how their peddling in the streets has become an integral part of our culture. It is a fitting tribute to traditions we have taken for granted.

"The modern system of mass production has made our daily lives comfortable and easy," Espiritu writes. "Sooner than later, the last-remaining set of indigenous wrapping will be replaced by mass-produced packages made of materials that will only hasten the destruction of the environment. When the time comes, the traditional way of packaging food will be fondly remembered as a memory of a past era." The book is beautifully photographed by Marilen's son, Johann Espiritu.

MAHUSAY

BEAUTIFULLY wrapped Pastillas de Leche

THE BOOK will be out after its formal launch on Oct. 25.

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A. LIPIN — By Jess Abbott

DICK TRACY

JAMES BOND

BABY BLUES — By Jerry Scott

TULDOR — By Mark Coll

BEN — By Daniel Shelton

DAILY CROSSWORD

By Allan E. Parrish — 10/15/08

Monday's Puzzle Solved

HOROSCOPE

By Francis Drake

ARIES (March 21 to April 20): Beware of fruitless visits to particular locations. Stay away, and you'll be glad to be there go on every weekend. Don't waste your time.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): For the next few months, you've been plagued with silly accidents and mixed-up communications. Is it your own fault? These errors will provide a blow to the immediate future.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Eliminating the stress to spend, by avoiding bills and financial projects are not the best. Everything will be more manageable.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You have been cooped up, your emotions are heavy. You can begin to restore your home, because the dust is now otherwise unsettled.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): The arrows that have been flying your way in unexpected directions are now pointed in your direction. Arm bearers are a definite must as of today. Your life will start to take shape.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Financial deals are developing over ways to keep money and now an inward look within. You additionally have outlined with dance sensations in this area for the next month.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Monday has been designed to close open doors and unfinished business. Don't start anything new, instead concentrate on finishing up and continue cleaning out. Some books will help.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your confidence will increase now and into future. Your ideas have been made into reality and you received quite a few compliments. Some exciting developments are happening. Youre getting more organized.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your self-esteem will increase now and into future. Your ideas have been made into reality and you received quite a few compliments. Some exciting developments are happening. Youre getting more organized.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Cultivate your self-esteem with others, parents and children have been extraordinary in the past month. Your public failure. The pernicious influence is over as of today. Yay!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Visual plans will move ahead more efficiently and swiftly now. This will be a period in which you are productive. It is higher education contributing needs. Isolation and the cold. Everything is beautifully laid-out.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): New ideas, new projects, new properties, entertainment, insurance matters and more will be able to get out of the ground now. Things that were stalling now in the cases are finally one in the series.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

		3		1		4		
	2		7		9		8	
	7						6	
		1	3	2	4	9		
			9		6			
			1		5			
	1	5				7	4	
2								8
	8	9	6	3	7	1	5	

Difficulty Level ★★★

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	8	2	4	7	6	5	9	1
4	6	1	3	5	9	7	8	2
5	7	9	1	8	2	6	4	3
2	9	6	7	9	4	1	3	5
7	3	9	2	5	1	8	6	4
1	4	5	6	8	3	9	2	7
9	1	4	8	3	5	2	7	6
6	2	7	5	4	8	3	1	9

Marilen Espiritu's true-to-form...

from page D1

Lunch

Our lunch was to a outlet in the garden of Marilen's house. There she rotates her crafts and hand-made gifts. The tables were simple and elegant with plates in different colors and mother-of-pearl silverware. The centerpiece was filled with flowers and fruits casually arranged on the table.

SCRUMPTIOUS lunch in a nutshell

MARIEN ba-baw-in the wood-burning oven in Marilen's backyard

"LECHON de leche" made in Marilen's oven-roasted oven

A MAKE-your-own-gourmet-bar for dessert

GIRLAMAYS wrapped in Marilen's for lunch munch include corn nuggets, pork and bagoong kalayan.

The lunch's highlight was seafood buffet served on a miniature wooden bonco. The seafood buffet included scallops, oysters, shrimp, tilapia, mussels, clams, seaweed salad with bagoong kalayan and ginger-dipping sauces.

SEAFOOD buffet

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ENTERTAINMENT

Edite Bonnie S. Velarde

Goodbye to one rare, true talent

By Marinel R. Cruz

HER LAST TELEVISION PROGRAM had a happy-ending finale on Friday, less than three days later, Kheyne Adalia, director of the hit GMA 7 series "Ako si Kim Samsoon," succumbed to colon cancer.

"We must be, he fought a gruelling battle," said Anja Aviores, Adalia's long-time partner. "This morning, he said he was tired and didn't want to fight anymore."

The cancer was diagnosed on Aug. 20. Adalia, also a respected theater actor and director, opted for alternative medicine, after reportedly being advised against undergoing chemotherapy. On Oct. 13, he was rushed to the UST Hospital after he complained of difficulty in breathing. At 7:30 a.m., he died of "severe complications arising from pneumonia," his trained MD on Oct. 2).

"He was a true professional, down-requested him," said "Kim Samsoon" program manager Ilaria Chavez. "He didn't want to stop working until he could no longer get up." Adalia filmed directing shots with Iwi-annie Zapata.

Claire Adalia, his sister, told Inquirer by phone on Monday that Kheyne was first confined at UST Hospital on Aug. 17 due to severe back pains. "A series of tests confirmed that he had stage 4 colon cancer. But he took the news well. He said he was grateful for his short time here."

In September, Chavez asked Gina Alajar and Tony Tuparan to play-host an award-night director on "Kim Samsoon."

Chavez said Adalia also worked earlier on the Kapuso shows "Love to Love" (2003-2006), "Magic Kamay" (2007) and "Mga Mata in Angkellus" (2007).

Adalia's remains lie at the Chapel B of Funeraria Paz on Aurora Avenue in Quezon City. Cremation is set on Saturday after the 11 a.m. Mass.

Kheyne is survived by his mother Crisenta and siblings Ding, Nenang, Nonong, Dave, Lulee, Claire and Tito.

KHEYNE received many awards, almost all of them for directing, and even acted occasionally, including a role in the 2007 film "Mga Mata in Angkellus."

Adalia's father died of cancer in 1998.

Adalia was also known for directing the GMA 7 prime time blockbusters "Te Amo: Singing Kita Sa Mga" (2006), "Babalang" (2004), and the QTV talk show "Mesa" (2008).

As a movie actor, Adalia appeared in "Grapevine" (1999), "Live Show" (2000) and, most recently, "My Blasted Wife," which will have a special screening on Thursday, 8:30 p.m., at the SM Film Center—proceeds of which will go to his family.

E-mail: mcruz@inquirer.com.ph

RP is 'country of honor' in Pusan fest '09

CHEER FACTOR

THE FILIPINOS WILL BE the "country of honor" in next year's Pusan International Film Festival in South Korea, festival director Kim Ji-Seok has announced. The Pusan fest is the largest in Asia. Nearly 200,000 people attended this year's nine-day event which closed Friday.

Digna Santiago, Philippine Film Export Services Office chair, was elected to the board of the Asian Film Commission-Network, which aims to attract producers to film in Asia. Santiago represents the Film Development Council of the Philippines in the commission.

As country of honor, the Philippines will have an entire section devoted to it, with up to 15 local movies for exhibition.

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Edu, Pinky next to wed?

ORENDA GARCIA AND INA CAGUIOA DOUG Brunner got hitched Oct. 9 at The Blue Leaf Events Pavilion. It was a simple Christian wedding with the reception held at Barbara and Jude Pavilion.

The celebrity guests were Myrene Garcia, Angelu de Leon, Jill Rodriguez, Miguel Rabat, Jackie Forster, LJ Moreno, Mike Palanca, Bodie Antonio, Chris Tiu, Dough cinnamon and Richard and Raymond Gutierrez. Jeffrey Hidalgo sang during the rites.

The entourage included Chesca's brothers Patrick and Pichon Garcia, Toni Fast, Liz Uy, Councilor Ian Ong, Dianne Fingets and Sean Carlos.

"When they read the vows they wrote for each other, the waterworks started," said the bride's close friend Cookie del Mar. "I knew Doug would be the lucky man because he knew how to handle her."

I remember how Cheska drastically declared her brother Derick during the controversial Jennylyn Mercado episode in his life. For sure, she will also stand by her man. The question that make Charles a good dater are the same ones that guarantee she'll be an ideal wife.

Next in line?

Bill Kho, Monsour and Pinky Webb in the race seen to take the plunge? I sent a text message to Edu to get the real score. He neither confirmed nor denied it. Will they tie the knot or not?

Dolly Wood

Dolly Anne Carvajal

Archery bet

Marvin Agustin is busy training for the Asian Archery Grand Prix on Oct. 23-29. I texted him, "So who will Cynd's seven suitors bet you against?" He laughed, "Magaling ako sumiksik. Alabtop ng balls eye!"

Marvs is armed and dangerous!

Guess list

● While a singer was strutting his stuff on stage, a socialite/model kept yelling at him, "Oy ng!" He owns the model and first RP/Asian country fan boasted about he got from their boutique. Even if his sons are the naturals, he's no model of reliability. How can he keep his date up without paying up?

● This sexy actress turns out of her way to befriend the ex-hubby of her ex-BF's ex-wife. "Wawa pa kasi ajon sa ajuno! And ajong ashby ahang nag-e-exercise nang sa ajonang ng ex ng ex-ajon," says a guy insider. Excess baggage weighs her heart down. Hay!

● An award-winning actress was asking guests as a party to describe a veteran actress in one word. Result? A unanimous thumbs-down! And that '08 spare the best years of her life in showbiz, yet her colleagues remember her as the worst way.

Girl bonding

I momentarily rejoiced my girl bonding with Rufa Mae Quinto last Wednesday and Friday at Cuisine, Fl. ...ntinos, California

EDU U

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 MAX PAYNE PG-13 12:00, 2:45, 5:30, 7:50, 10:00
2 BODY OF LIES R-18 1:10, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40
3 TROPIC THUNDER R-18 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
4 STRANGERS R-18 2:25, 4:40, 6:55, 9:10
IGOR GP 2:40, 4:50, 7:00, 9:30

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AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 BODY OF LIES	2 MAX PAYNE	3 THE STRANGERS	4 IGLAM			
GLORIETTA 4	1 TROPIC THUNDER	2 EAGLE EYE	3 BODY OF LIES				
	4 PINEAPPLE EXPRESS	5 APPALOOSA	6 MAX PAYNE	7 THE STRANGERS			
GREENBELT 1	1 BODY OF LIES	2 MAX PAYNE					
GREENBELT 3	1 BODY OF LIES	2 MAX PAYNE					
	3 PINEAPPLE EXPRESS	4 THE STRANGERS	5 TROPIC THUNDER				
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 MAX PAYNE	2 THE STRANGERS					
	3 BODY OF LIES	4 APPALOOSA	5 TROPIC THUNDER				
NINA CENTER EDSA	1 MAX PAYNE	2 BODY OF LIES	3 TROPIC THUNDER	4 QUANTUM OF SOLACE			
MARKET! MARKET!	1 MAX PAYNE	2 THE STRANGERS					
	3 TROPIC THUNDER	4 BODY OF LIES	5 IGLAM				
TRINOMA	1 IGLAM	2 EAGLE EYE	3 THE STRANGERS	4 APPALOOSA			
	5 TROPIC THUNDER	6 BODY OF LIES	7 MAX PAYNE				

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER JOB FAIR
October 15-17, Glorietta Activity Center

Greenbelt
SHOPPING SPREE AT GREENBELT 1
Win exciting prizes and a P30,000 GSC for every P500 worth of purchase at any Greenbelt 1 establishment
August 15-October 15

Alabang Town Center
SOUTHERN CUISINE AT THE TOWN
October 17, 18 & 31, 5:00pm, Home Zone

Ayala Center Cebu
THINK PINK! MEMORABILIA EXHIBIT
October 12 to 27, Paseo Estate

Market! Market!
AUTOMOTIC CENTER APPLIANCE FAIR
October 1 - 13, Activity Center

Christian Life
Redeeming Philippines presents Bishop Bill Hill Jr.
August 31 to October 19, 2008
For details, call 8819-0 or log on to www.redeemingphilippines.com

Ayala Malls Cinemas
I REVENGE
Ongoing until 27 November 2008 at Second Floor
For details, call Glorietta at 757-7777 or 21 local 28 or visit www.gloriettacinemas.com

Tri Noma
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October 15, 6:30pm, 3rd Level Rainbow Area (near Powerplus)
MAGIC'S APPLIANCE MADNESS
September 26 - Oct. 19, Activity Center

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Ayala Malls

Glorietta · Greenbelt · Alabang Town Center · Ayala Center Cebu · Trinoma · Tri Noma

Pretenage 02

Pierre Kitchen, Cosmetique RTW and Menhuri Only.

Gratis sa ng immortal friend Ridzia Bandoi and and Ind Gaiga Arumenha for giving Ryhi Dhola Macri nicknames and on an overdose of luv. Pehi sang saves so happy-go-lucky and carefree on screen but once you get to really know her, you'll find that she has depth, and that love for her family outweighs all the lower she's ever had in her colorful life. Love yah, Bonbon Ili. to and my 40 Through thick and thin, sick and sin, sayo perter

Vhong's back

The box-office tandem of Toni Gonzaga and Vhong Navarro is back in Star Cinema's 15th anniversary offering "My Only U," which opens Oct. 29.

Toni and Vhong were on the verge of falling for each other many heartbreak ago but things got cheaper.

That's what I call a "lavers ever after." There's a thin line between love and friendship. What's more important for Vhong? "If you can have both, why not?," he said. "There's nothing wrong with being in love with your best friend."

Would he be to a lover to open her the pain or self her the truth? "Di's better na malaman niyo ang totoo kaht masaktan siya. Mas mainam naman yng nalaman ya niya na dito."

Mr. Suave has turned into a love guro, ouy, guro.

Star-studded event

The 25th branch of celebrities' free skin clinic Flawless opened Sept. 26 in Olongapo (R & P Bldg. 2043 Rizal Avenue). Katrina Halili, Mark Herras, Rich Asuncion, Tess Bomb, Alyssa Alamon and Butch Francisco joined the celebration.

"We really hope to open more franchise branches even internationally," Ruby Carrasco, Flawless vice-chairperson managing director, said. "We want Flawless all over the world to have access to our services and not spend a fortune to look good."

Being flawless shouldn't make you penniless!

True Faith gigs

Catch my all-time favorite band True Faith at Ambo-Mezzanelli (Oct. 17, 22 and 29), Eastwood and Cubo Libre Las Pilas (Oct. 17), Trinoma (Oct. 21), Cuba Libre Mandaluyong (Oct. 24), Conte General Pablito (Oct. 23), Tambalan (Oct. 28), 18th Bar Malabon (Oct. 30), Gumaca Quezon (Oct. 31). They livened up my mom' birthday bash.

Make True Faith a part of your celebration, too. (Call 0918-9220903 or e-mail: luckyandy@yahoo.com). I'm a true-blue True Faith fanatic through and through!

E-mail saysing: balukbokgirls@yahoo.com

CHESKA Garcia and Dong Kramer during their Christian wedding

CINEMA ACCESS: 635-5555

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GALLERIA

1 MAX PAYNE
2 MAX PAYNE
3 THE STRANGERS
4 BODY OF LIES
5 APALOOSA
6 EAGLE EYE
7 TROPIC THUNDER
8 SAGE
9 BURIED ALIVE
10 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM

ERMITA

1 THE STRANGERS
2 MAX PAYNE
3 BODY OF LIES
4 APALOOSA
5 TROPIC THUNDER
6 RESERVED
7 RESERVED
8 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
9 EAGLE EYE / BURIED ALIVE

METRO EAST

1 APALOOSA
2 MAX PAYNE
3 BODY OF LIES
4 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
5 TROPIC THUNDER
6 MIRRORS
7 EAGLE EYE
8 BURIED ALIVE

NOVALICHES

1 MAX PAYNE
2 BODY OF LIES
3 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
4 MIRRORS

PIONEER

1 MAX PAYNE
2 THE STRANGERS
3 APALOOSA
4 BODY OF LIES

STA. ROSA

1 BODY OF LIES
2 MAX PAYNE
3 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
4 EAGLE EYE

LIPA

1 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
2 MIRRORS
3 DISASTER MOVIE
4 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL

DASMARINAS

1 THREE KINGDOMS
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 MAKE IT HAPPEN
4 MAX PAYNE

IMUS

1 BODY OF LIES
2 MAX PAYNE
3 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
4 EAGLE EYE

ANGELES

1 MAX PAYNE
2 EAGLE EYE
3 MUTANT CHRONICLES
4 THREE KINGDOMS

STARMILLS

1 MAX PAYNE
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 EAGLE EYE
4 MAKE IT HAPPEN
5 MUTANT CHRONICLES
6 DISASTER MOVIE

BACOLOD

1 MAX PAYNE
2 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
3 MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL
4 MAKE IT HAPPEN
5 MUTANT CHRONICLES
6 THREE KINGDOMS

ILOILO

1 BODY OF LIES
2 MAX PAYNE
3 MAG-INGAT KA SA KULAM
4 MIRRORS
5 100 FEET
6 THREE KINGDOMS

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P180

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ASHES. Pinoza

POND-Dos

NADIA Montenegro

MELISSA Etheridge (left) and partner Tammy Lynn Michaels plan to tie wedding California's vote next month on whether to strip same-sex couples of the right to marry.

By the Inquisitr and Inquisitr.net Entertainment Staff

FOR THOSE WHO WONDERED IF THAT was late-night smiling with a girl and a 2-year-old boy in SM Mega Mall, yes, he was.

Actual Pinoza, now-famous from man of the US Social Security, arrived in Manila before October Oct. 30 after a 60-stop tour across America and Europe. You'd think he'd take at least one day off.

Instead, he brought girlfriend Cherry and son Cherish to the mall.

Rushes

Tuesday, he stole his brand-new Harris van from the airport to his newly-purchased home in Quezon City.

He has momentarily lost his previous vices, but he's staying through the holidays before resuming touring in January. Autobiography and untitled sounds like a great way to get those pipes back in shape.

'Secret dad' named

Remember Crissy Bressin's colleagues on "The Buzz" that Nadia Montenegro secretly got pregnant and secretly delivered a baby that she asked a friend to take care of?

Incredulous though that may sound, "proof" now gives unofficially...not as secretly...during a press con by someone on Crissy's side, who claimed the secret father (he's a musician) has named talkster Internet for previous disruptive behavior (yeah, in fact, having a hemorrhage account of this).

Monster manager

Talent Manager we just learned from another talent manager, has been forging the signature of her talent in order to make some money—$ 9 Million gubbles to "some."

This avoidably TM has another Word who source broke her off. TM supposedly has shtf by the neck because, the rumor goes, she got pregnant by her last known boyfriend, and TM lashed out the "remedy" is that in the job description for a manager?

Mean Mr Mustard

An explosive new tell-all book, Brian Lennon: 'His Life,' by Beatle biographer Philip Norman, portrays Lennon as Mean Mr Mustard.

We got this tidbit from Huffington Post.

One part of the book has John Lennon recalling how her husband cheated on her—while she was in the next room:

"She (a woman in a party) didn't come on to him at all, he just pulled her and went into the next room. And then they were groping and all that, and we were all, again... One of the other guests was very blind and put a record on, Bob Dylan or something, so that we don't hear it. But we heard it anyway. And everyone had their coats in the next room, where John and this girl are making out so nobody can go home." According to the report, that's not the funniest thing in the book, either.

HEAT Kyodjor's insurance company has warn-austin Los Angeles he may paying out $ 8 million in benefits to his daughter, claiming the actor may have committed suicide, according to court papers.

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekend's goddess on TV (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

•Carlene Aguilar, asked if she has found a man to replace Dennis Trillo:

"Marami akong inspirasyon. Hindi lang isa." (Quite so also)

•Denniz' reaction:

"Of all sites. Pulang pula mo..."

(Sounds like relief.)

•Richard Gutierrez, on his extended trip to Paris with KC Concepcion for the premiere of their movie:

"It was a good trip for us. Sick is the city of love." (Which is saying nothing, or saying everything, depending on which side of Mega you're on.)

•Joseph Marngard, on his kissing scene with Polo Ravales for an upcoming movie:

"Ginamot pala ang mahalikan ng lalaki. Para siguro natin 'yun? Parang wala naman tulo-jo." (No, boys sang it?)

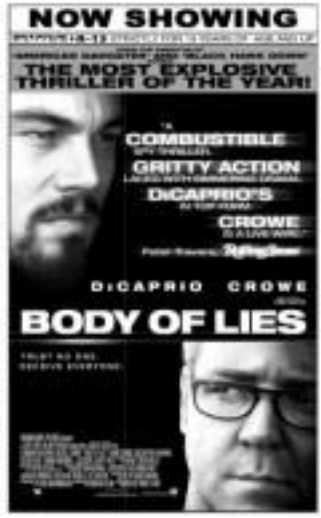
•Dingdong Dantes, on rumors of a split with Marian:

"Basta ang importante ... hanggang ngayon masaya kami sama ang isa't isa." (Which is not saying much or false.)

•Regine Velasquez, on Michelle Van Etten:

"Ang bait-bait talaga niya." (As done friends say, "What's your name, again?" /p-bilgbal.)

(Starmill, The Star)



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